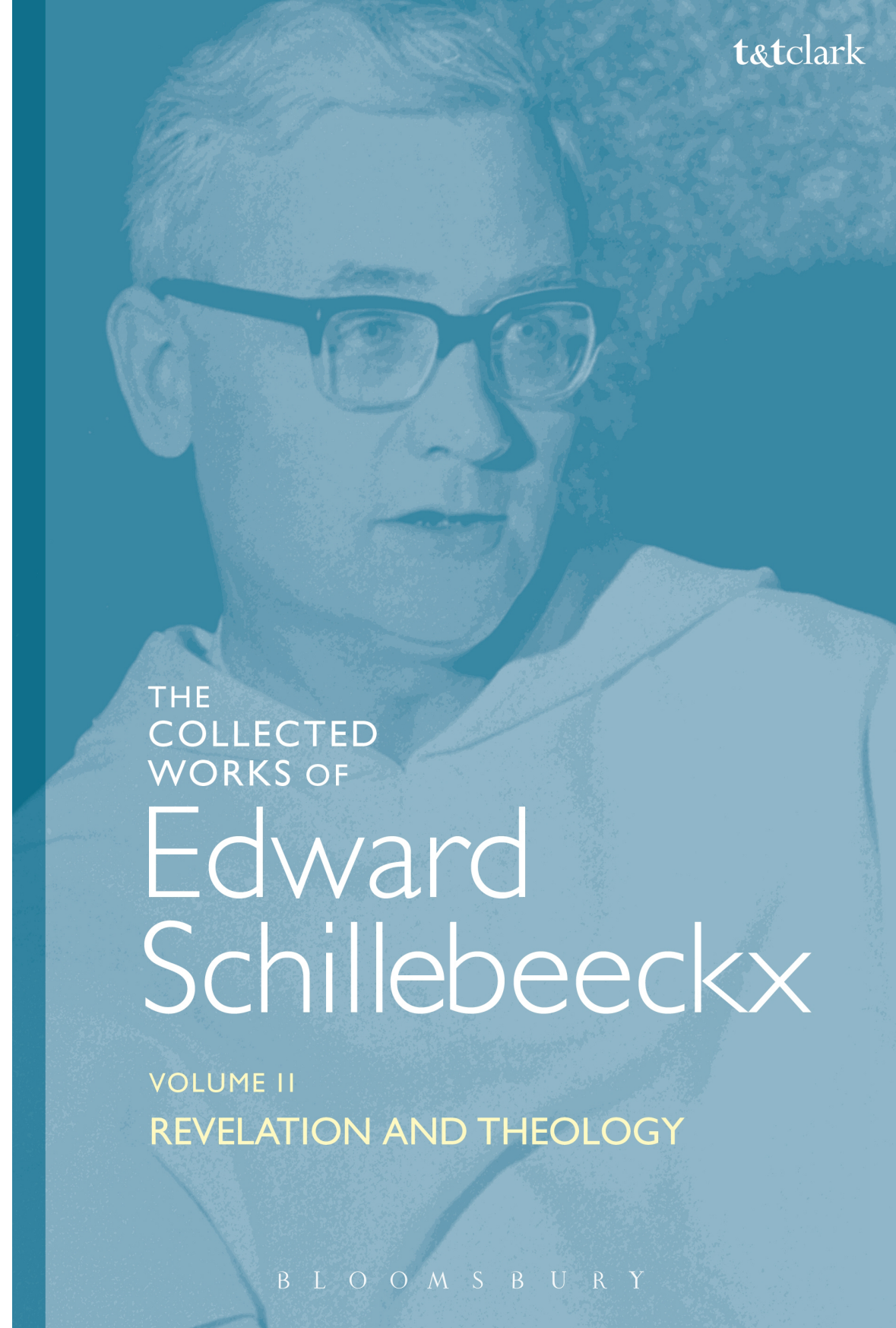

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THE COLLECTED WORKS OF

Edward Schillebeeckx

VOLUME II

REVELATION AND THEOLOGY

BLOOMSBURY

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF EDWARD SCHILLEBEECKX

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EDWARD SCHILLEBEECKX

VOLUME II

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Most secondary literature on *Revelation and Theology* refers to the UK editions. Volume I was published under the title *Revelation and Theology* (London/ Syndey: Sheed & Ward 1967) and Volume II as *The Concept of Truth and Theological Renewal* (London/Sydney: Sheed & Ward 1968). In order to avoid confusion, we recommend that this practice should be kept for references to this new edition in the Collected Works of Edward Schillebeeckx. The page numbers of the old editions can be found in the margins between square brackets.

In the United States, Volume I was published under the same title *Revelation and Theology* (New York: Sheed & Ward 1967) and Volume II as *Revelation and Theology II* (New York: Sheed & Ward 1968). Please note that the US editions had different pagenumbers.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAP	St Thomas Aquinas, *In Aristotelis Analytica Posteriora*
AAS	*Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* Rome 1909ff.
AM	St Thomas Aquinas, *In Aristotelis Metaphysica*
Ang	*Angelicum,* Rome 1924ff.
AP	*Archives de Philosophie,* Paris 1923ff.
Bbl	*Biblica,* Rome 1920ff.
Bijd	*Bijdragen,* Maastricht
BT	St Thomas Aquinas, *In Boethium de Trinitate*
BThom	*Bulletin thomiste,* La Saulchoir 1924ff.
BZ	*Biblische Zeitschrift,* Paderborn n.s. 1957ff.
Carit	St Thomas Aquinas, *De Caritate*
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly,* Washington, DC 1939ff.
CEG	St Thomas Aquinas, *Contra Errores Graecorum*
CIC	*Codex Iuris Canonici,* Rome 1918
CLC	*Actorum et Decreiorum S. Conciliorum recentiorum Collectio Lacensis,* Freiburg 1870ff.
Conc	*Concilium,* London 1965ff.
DN	St Thomas Aquinas, *De Divinis Nominibus*
DR	H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum, Definitionum, et Declarationum de Rebus Fidei et Morum,* ed. Karl Rahner, Freiburg 1953[29]
DS	H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum,* ed. Adolf Schönmetzer, Freiburg 1963[32]
DTC	*Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique,* Paris 1930ff[3]
DTF	*Divus Thomas,* Fribourg 1886-1953
DTP	*Divus Thomas,* Piacenza 1880ff.
DV	*Dieu Vivant,* Paris 1945ff.
EJ	St Thomas Aquinas, *Super Evangelium secundum Johannem*
EL	*Ephemerides Liturgicae,* Rome 1887ff.
ER	St Thomas Aquinas, *In Epistulam ad Romanos*
ETL	*Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses,* Louvain 1924ff.
Greg	*Gregorianum,* Rome 1920ff.
KA	*Katholiek Archief*

KT	*Kerk en Theologie*
LV	*Lumière et Vie,* Lyon 1951ff.
Mansi	*Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collèctio,* ed. J. Mansi, Florence 1759ff. and Paris-Leipzig 1901-27
MM	*Misc. de Meyer*
n.	number (issue)
n.	note (footnote)
NKS	*Nederlandse Katholieke Stemmen,* Zwolle 1901ff.
NRT	*Nouvelle Revue Théologique,* Louvain 1925ff.
OG	*Ons Geloof*
PG	*Patrologiae Cursus completus, Series Graeca,* ed. J. P. Migne, Paris 1857ff.
PL	*Patrologiae Cursus completus, Series Latina,* ed. J. P. Migne, Paris 1844ff.
Potent	St Thomas Aquinas, *De Potentia*
Prd	*Periodica de Re Morali, Canonica, Liturgica,* Rome 1930ff.
QLP	*Questions liturgiques et paroissiales,* Louvain 1910ff.
Quinz	*La Quinzaine,* Paris 1929-32
Quodl	St Thomas Aquinas, *Quodlibeta Disputata*
RAM	*Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique,* Toulouse 1920ff.
RF	St Thomas Aquinas, *De Rationibus Fidei*
RHE	*Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique,* Louvain 1900ff.
RIP	*Revue Internationale de Philosophie,* Brussels, 1938ff.
RMM	*Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale,* Paris 1893ff.
RNP	*Revue néoscolastique de Philosophie,* Louvain 1894ff.
RSPT	*Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques,* Paris 1907ff.
RSR	*Recherches de Science Religieuse,* Paris 1910ff.
RSR(US)	*Revue des Sciences Religieuses de l' Université de Strasbourg,* Strasbourg 1924ff.
RSV	*The Holy Bible* (Revised Standard Version, Edinburgh and London 1946ff.)
RT	*Revue thomiste,* Brussels 1893ff.
RTAM	*Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale,* Louvain 1929ff.
SBAW	*Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu München,* Munich 1860ff.
SC	*Studi Cattolici,* Rome 1957ff.
SCG	St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*
Schol	*Scholastik,* Freiburg 1926ff. *1, 2, 3, 4*
1, 2, 3, 4 Sent	St Thomas Aquinas, *In Quattuor Sententiarum P. Lombardi Libros,* I, II, III, IV
ST	St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*

StTh	*Studia Theologica,* Lund 1949ff.
TG	*Theologie und Glaube,* Paderborn 1909ff.
Thom	*Thomist,* Washington DC, 1939ff.
TL	*Tijdschrift voor Liturgie*
TP	*Tijdschrift voor Philosophie,* Louvain 1929ff.
TT	*Tijdschrift voor Theologie,* 1961ff.
Verit	St Thomas Aquinas, *De Veritate*
VT	*Vox Theologica*
WW	*Wort und Wahrheit,* Freiburg 1946ff.
ZKT	*Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie,* Innsbruck 1877ff.

Introduction to

COLLECTED WORKS OF EDWARD SCHILLEBEECKX

Without a doubt Prof. Mag. Dr Edward Schillebeeckx O.P. (1914-2009) is one of the most creative and influential theologians of the 20th and 21st century. His work has been much discussed and is still widely popular in academic and pastoral circles. Schillebeeckx played a major role in theological and ecclesiastic renewal. His academic studies and scholarly pastoral books, sermons and lectures continue to inspire a wide reading public. His considerable authority as a scholar is based on extensive knowledge of the Christian tradition coupled with compassionate involvement with people and movements in church and society, especially those who are exposed to injustice and suffering.

A theologian of such exceptional stature in the Dutch language area certainly deserves enduring public attention. In 2004, therefore, on the occasion of Schillebeeckx's 90th birthday, the Edward Schillebeeckx Foundation made the first moves for the publication of his collected works. Extensive discussion followed on just what kind of publication we envisaged: a complete and comprehensive overview of his work, a critical edition of his monographs, an annotated reissue of his most innovative works and/or a selective republication of articles, including reflection on their reception. The preparatory committee − consisting of Dick Boer, Erik Borgman, Wil Derkse, Stephan van Erp, Mijke Jetten, Kristanto Budiprabowo, Frans Maas, Robert Schreiter, Ted Mark Schoof O.P., Nico Schreurs and Carl Sterkens – was soon confronted with a major problem: the sheer volume of Schillebeeckx's work. He was a very prolific writer indeed. This is borne out by the updated version of Schillebeeckx's bibliography, compiled and published by Ted Schoof and Jan van de Westelaken, which can be found on the foundation's website: www.schillebeeckx.nl. A publication of his complete works, therefore, seemed virtually impossible. Some of them had been published in one language only (mostly Dutch, but also German and French), while translations, though usually meticulously checked by or on behalf of the author, at times differed somewhat from the original. Because of practical concerns like financial

constraints and the limited availability of translations we confined ourselves to a re-publication of Schillebeeckx's major works – still a daunting endeavour.

For similar reasons we decided not to republish the original Dutch texts but only translations, although we realize that not even the best translation can adequately convey the often subtle nuances and delicate shades of meaning of the original. Various misunderstandings at Schillebeeckx's much publicized 'conversation' with Vatican authorities on Christology in 1980 illustrate this risk. It seemed logical to choose translations which would be accessible to the extensive Anglophone world. Fortunately quite a number of good translations of Schillebeeckx's publications were available. Nonetheless a great deal of the *Collected Works* were revised once more, both linguistically and substantively. The translations of volumes 1 to 5 did not require checking: that had already been done at the time of the publication of the English versions (between 1963 and 1974) by Schillebeeckx's fellow brother and assistant at the time, Ted Mark Schoof, who, before concluding his theological education with Edward Schillebeeckx in Nijmegen, had followed the regular theology course of four years at Blackfriars, Oxford. Of the volumes 6, 7 and 11 the as yet untranslated parts were either translated or edited by Marcelle Manley. This applies particularly to volume 11, most of which now appears in English for the first time, but also to a new section in volume 7 (*Christ. The Christian experience in the modern world*). As for volume 6 (*Jesus: An experiment in Christology*), the (somewhat laboured) original translation by Hubert Hoskins was edited by Sr Joanna Dunham, and subsequently thoroughly revised and re-edited by Marcelle Manley, in such depth that she should be mentioned as co-translator. The substantive accuracy of John Bowden's original translations of volumes 7 to 10 (and of volumes 6 and 11 as well) was checked by Ted Schoof. Hence they are now published as 'authorized' versions. Volume 9 (*The church with a human face*) required such extensive terminological corrections that the earlier translation can no longer be considered reliable. In each volume the section 'How to use this book' synoptically outlines a format for references to the text.

Although many linguistic and substantive changes were introduced, we did not opt for gender-inclusive language. Present-day translations would undoubtedly have used this style, but for the sake of maximum fidelity to the original text, and for the practical reason that the English versions of volumes 1 to 5 did not require checking, we decided not to do so.

These *Collected Works* include Schillebeeckx's unquestionably major theological works. We chose them for their historical significance, theological relevance and impact on developments in theology and church communities. It was no coincidence that these works were mostly out of print. In the *Collected Works* each volume will have a short introduction providing a brief sketch of its background, context and relevance.

The Edward Schillebeeckx Foundation is proud to present Schillebeeckx's most influential works in one readily available series. We thank the Flemish and Dutch provinces of the Dominican Order for making this publication possible. We hope its readers' enjoyment of these works will be as great as our appreciation of the support we received.

Prof. Dr Nico Schreurs
Chairman, Edward Schillebeeckx Foundation

Introduction to the new edition

REVELATION AND THEOLOGY

When the original Dutch edition of this collection of Schillebeeckx's essays appeared in 1964, the author had reached his 50th birthday. But he could not find the time for a proper celebration. In those days Schillebeeckx was in Rome, where he attended the Second Vatican Council as theological advisor of the Dutch bishops. His letters from this period indicate that there certainly was no shortage of work: preparing documents and interventions for the bishops, scores of lectures in various languages as refresher courses for theologians, journalists and bishops, and exhausting meetings with fellow theologians about the planning and design of a new international theological journal, the later *Concilium*. Meanwhile he also worried about his specialist courses at the University of Nijmegen, which temporarily had been handed over to various colleagues. But in Rome he had also made a name for himself as the main ghostwriter of an innovatory pastoral letter of the Dutch bishops about the council (1960), translated in several languages, which – looked at retrospectively – anticipated new views which would find their way into the conciliar documents. In the midst of all this, he was also the author of a widespread, far-reaching commentary on the drafts of conciliar documents supplied beforehand by the Vatican. Outside his language area Schillebeeckx had so far been known mainly because of his original views on the sacraments and christian life, put forward in his book *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God*, which in 1964 was available in French, German, Spanish and English. But ever more people, especially those gathered at the council, wondered what more this clearly erudite and pioneering theologian had produced in that mysterious language area of his own. This query was in fact behind the plan to issue his collected essays in several volumes – including translation in various languages – which Schillebeeckx himself announces in the Foreword to this first volume.

The contributions in this first volume document how from 1945 onwards – the point at which he had become lecturer in systematic theology and spiritual director of the Dominican students in Louvain – Schillebeeckx transformed traditional theological methods and treatises, in the line of fellow members of

his order such as Marie-Dominique Chenu, Yves Congar and the Louvain philosopher Domien De Petter, whose work he had studied intensively. In contrast with a similar series of collected studies by Karl Rahner Schillebeeckx arranged his 'Theological Soundings' according to themes. In this first volume one finds fundamental theological questions, according to the position he had reached shortly before Vatican II.[1] For, as Schillebeeckx himself insists frequently: Before Vatican II inspired (later) theology, the earlier, mostly hidden theology of renewal came into its own at the council and could influence it deeply.

The English translation of *Openbaring en Theologie* was published in two volumes, which each contained two parts of the one-volume Dutch work. The first volume of the English translation was entitled *Revelation and Theology* (1967) and contained parts 1 and 2 of the original Dutch. The second volume of the English translation was published with a new title, *The Concept of Truth and Theological Renewal* (London/Sydney: Sheed & Ward, 1968; in the American edition *Revelation and Theology II*), and contained parts 3 and 4 of the original Dutch. This re-edition publishes the texts once again in one volume as originally intended by the author. The numbering of the pages you can find in the margins of this book, refer to the two English editions of 1967 and 1968. These editions were widely distributed and frequently used in studies on Schillebeeckx. To avoid confusion, we recommend to keep the practice of referring to the old pagenumbers in the margins.

In part 1, Schillebeeckx' 'introduction to theology' can in fact be found, as he himself remarks (Preface, xvii). This had its origin in his extensive courses at the Dominican House of Studies in Louvain, filled in and heavily summarized so that they could be inserted in the *Theologisch Woordenboek* (Theological Dictionary) edited from 1952 onwards by the Dutch Dominicans. One finds his contributions mainly in the latter volumes of the Dictionary (from 1957 onwards), in which a new editor of the Dictionary wanted to chart a less traditional and more innovatory course by adding an ever growing number of contributions by Schillebeeckx. These can be found mainly in part 2 of *Revelation and Theology*, apart from his article on dogmatic development (chapter 4), which does indeed fit more conveniently in part 1, 'Revelation and its "tradition"'. In addition to this study part 1 contains contributions on the background of such problems of a somewhat different genre: an article on the (then) recent, ecumenical approach to Scripture and tradition, a few pages written for a congress (also ecumenical) of theology students about the

[1] On this point cf. E. Borgman, *Edward Schillebeeckx: A Theologian in his History,* I: *A Catholic Theology of Culture (1914-1965)*, London/New York: Continuum, 2003, especially Chapter 4, `The Louvain Theological Synthesis', pp. 191-282; for the fundamental questions especially pp. 191-232.

kerygma of the early Church and an essay on the relationship of Word and Sacrament from the French journal *Lumière et vie* (1960; at the end of the book the original titles and years of publication of each article can be found).

Schillebeeckx' contributions to the Dictionary are composed very densely, filled to the brim with notes and literature, and taken together they form about a third of the (original) book. Its central study is the extensive article 'What is Theology?', which at the time was recognized as a creative transformation of the traditional treatise, clearly inspired also by the even much longer study Yves Congar had published some twenty years earlier in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*. This basic study of Schillebeeckx's is surrounded by articles on current subsidiary themes, updated and adapted by him: 'The Bible and Theology' (among other things on the necessity of biblical theology as 'point of departure' of systematic elaboration), some pages on the 'Place of the Church Fathers', followed by a fairly extensive study on the function of the 'Creed' in theology, some thoughts on the role of liturgy (originally 'Lex orandi, lex credendi') and a longer examination on the (then) delicate question of the function of the scholastic tradition in theology. Under this heading Schillebeeckx first combines two of his contributions from the Dictionary, on 'Argument from authority' and on 'Loci theologici'. In his view both should not be derived from 'Thomism' as it had developed into a system in the 19th century, but be elaborated directly from the texts and rich basic intuition of Thomas Aquinas, - a procedure used in those days (in the line of Chenu and Congar) to escape to some extent the narrow limits of official theology. This analysis is followed by an older study (1945) on the question which cropped up time and again: whether theology should (only) be concerned with 'truth' or (also) with what is 'of value for one's own life'.

Part 3 raises basic questions around the 'Value of our Speech about God'. It starts with a contribution on truth which is much less technical and in fact composed for Vatican II, sketching its background: the fundamental idea of 'truth' and earlier attempts to transcend its abstract expressions. This approach leads to Bultmann's 'demythologizing' and a 'Reinterpretation of Dogma' (in which Schillebeeckx presents the paradoxical notion of 'developments ... by a process of breaking off', 27). Such ideas start a process in his reflection on interpretation of tradition and its dynamic developments which eventually will lead to his later 'hermeneutics'. A more fundamental study on 'The Non-conceptual Intellectual Dimension' according to Thomas Aquinas (1952), was thought to demand so much from the reader that in the English translation it was banished to an 'Appendix'. However, in these "Collected Works" we put it once again where the author wanted it to be: as a contribution to 'The value of our Speech about God'. A development of the basic ideas of this article and also of the historical data which had been rediscovered can be found in 'The

Non-Conceptual Intellectual Element in the Act of Faith', an extensive review of Max Seckler's *Instinkt und Glaubenswille nach Thomas von Aquin* (1962), in which Schillebeeckx in fact presents a new approach to the act of faith which transcends and strongly relativizes the traditional role of abstract, 'conceptualistic' expressions. These two studies are of fundamental importance for the correct understanding of Schillebeeckx' later work. They present the basis of what, in the line of his philosophical guide De Petter, will remain Schillebeeckx' own approach, – an approach which runs parallel to the view developed by Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan in the line of Joseph Maréchal, but which also differs from it significantly.

The fourth part on 'Renewal in Present-day Theology' contains two studies: (1) an older article (1953) which deals with the tension in scholastic theology between salvation history and (abstract) theology, which Schillebeeckx tries to overcome with the help of the terms 'theologia' and 'oikonomia', and (2) the programme Schillebeeckx sketched for the Dutch 'Journal of Theology' he started (*Tijdschrift voor Theologie*, 1961ff). In the latter Schillebeeckx formulated, as he remarked afterwards, developments he anticipated in the years before Vatican II. The outcome of the council, and the discussions which developed at about the same time around J.A.T. Robinson's *Honest to God*, put the relationship between people's daily life and modern culture permanently on the agenda. Thus Schillebeeckx' early expectations began to be realized (partly) in unexpected and undreamt of ways. The next volumes of his 'Soundings' will contain studies to illustrate this.

Ted Mark Schoof O.P.

PREFACE

I am deeply indebted both to my superiors in the Order of Preachers and to my publisher for this opportunity of collecting my already-published articles and re-publishing them in book form, together with various published and unpublished lectures. For some time past it has been impossible to satisfy all the requests for offprints of articles, and several of the journals in which some of my articles have appeared have ceased to exist. Certain articles have been photocopied and it has thus been possible to supply these articles to those who required them. It is clear, then, that the republication of my articles will do much to rectify this unsatisfactory situation. What is more, this collection is to be thematically arranged so that each volume will contain articles grouped around one single subject. The author himself must, however, accept that there is a certain disadvantage inherent in a collection of his articles written over a long period. For, although it may be unusual for him to dissociate himself completely from what he has written in the past, his thought has certainly undergone a process of development and, even if his ideas have not changed in any way, he would undoubtedly express what he wrote ten years ago quite differently now.

The whole series of volumes will include publications extending over a period of some twenty years, the earliest article dating from 1943. Even the earlier articles have been left unchanged, apart from certain points of style and, here and there, the omission or the condensation of a paragraph, in order to avoid repetition. The original place and date of publication has been given in each case, so that the articles may be read against their original historical background, which may, in certain cases, be important. As I have already said, the articles have not been collected in chronological order, but have been grouped under various themes. More recently published material has not been incorporated into earlier articles, since this would have placed this edition in a false perspective and resulted in a loss of the documentary character of the original articles.

After arranging the various articles according to theme, I came to the conclusion that the complete edition would comprise eight main volumes. These main volumes and their themes will be:

I. Revelation and theology
II. God and man
III. World and church
IV. Priest and layman
V. Jesus, the Christ
VI. Church and sacrament
VII. Christian 'spiritual life'
VIII. Religious life and dominican spirituality

Though the series as a whole has the general title *Theological Soundings,* each main volume will appear under its own title. In view of this, and of the fact that there may also be compelling reasons for giving priority to the publication of a particular main volume, the actual order in which the series is eventually published may differ from the order given above. Moreover, several of the main volumes may well, like this first, be further divided into two separate books.

Not all my articles are to be included in this collection. The choice has been determined above all by a desire to allow one article to throw light on the views expressed in another. In this book, for example, the reader will be able to see how a mainly historical article like 'The development of the apostolic faith into the dogma of the church' (part 1, chapter 4) provides a basis for part of the more speculative article 'Scholasticism and theology' (part 2, chapter 10). It will thus be to some extent apparent that the study of tradition (and, of course, of scripture) and so-called 'speculative theology' are indispensable to each other.

Because these articles have been grouped round one definite theme, this first main volume—that is, this and the second book which together comprise *Revelation and Theology*—may also be looked on as an introduction to theology, even though not all the questions which should arise in such an introduction are dealt with. Each of the two books of *Revelation and Theology* includes articles published between 1944/5 and 1962/3—precisely the period, in fact, of the great theological renewal in Europe. The characteristic features of this gradual development should, therefore, be seen mirrored in these books themselves.

In conclusion I should like to thank both my dominican superiors and my Dutch and Belgian colleagues, especially P. Defever and R. Bromberg, and my assistant, T.M. Schoof, for the help they have given me with all the work involved in preparing a volume for press.

Nijmegen,
Edward Schillebeeckx

Part 1

REVELATION AND ITS 'TRADITION'

Chapter 1

REVELATION, SCRIPTURE, TRADITION, AND TEACHING AUTHORITY

Although it is possible to speak of an anonymous revelation outside the Jewish-Christian religion only in the light of the historical reality which is Christ, and in no other way, I propose to postulate, at least for the sake of this enquiry, which aims at being a synthesis, this anonymous revelation. What is in fact an implication or a consequence of christianity will be seen here as its general background. It is necessary to state this explicitly at the outset, in order to avoid giving the impression that this preliminary consideration is un-biblical. What I have to say here will moreover be set out schematically, since I aim to do no more than provide a basis for discussion between catholic and protestant theologians.

1. THE BACKGROUND TO AND THE 'HEART' OF CHRISTIAN REVELATION: GOD'S EFFECTIVE SAVING WILL

We know, through the divine revelation in Christ, that God intended that all men should be saved in Christ and, what is more, that this salvation not only [004] was a possibility in Christ, but also has actually been brought by Christ, for all men, even though who in fact attains this salvation remains a mystery for us.

That is why it is possible to say that wherever men make history, a history of salvation or of perdition is brought about, because the significance they give their life is always, in acceptance or refusal, a response to the anonymous grace of God, his call to salvation. History is essentially a history made by human freedom. The real place where the human world becomes history is human freedom. If this freedom is confronted with Christ's salvation, though perhaps anonymously, in the universal and effective saving will of God, then this (implicit) confrontation with God's universal will to save—universal because it is concrete and individual with regard to *all* men—de facto causes a history of salvation or of perdition. Seen in the perspective of grace, secular human history is, via human freedom which responds in a negative or a positive way

(and which makes history), a history of salvation or of perdition. On the other hand, however, the freedom of the individual entering this world and its already formed human history also encounters an already existing history of salvation or of perdition, with the result that history itself has something to tell him, as it were from outside, about the God of salvation.

Included in the perspective of salvation from which God's attentive concern appeals to man through grace, man's situation is also characterised by the dynamic element of this call to salvation. The world, which was offered by God to man so that it should be given human significance, was offered to him concretely by the God of salvation. Thus, within the interior attraction of grace
[005] in which God offers the grace of faith to man, the world of creation, which is above all the world of one's fellow men, is a reference not only to the creative God, but also in the concrete sense to the living God, the God of salvation. In this way, creation, secular history, and man's encounter with his fellow men are all brought within the orbit of salvation. Within God's universally effective will to save, the world, as creation, as human history, and as human encounter acquires a special significance which it would not otherwise have of its own accord; it appears to us at the same time as a translation, however inadequate, of God's inward appeal to us through grace, as a means in and through which man is made more explicitly aware of this inward offer of grace, and finally as a sphere within which man may respond, either positively or negatively, to this divine appeal. That is why it is possible for us to say that, at least in the perspective of the saving mystery of Christ, the history of salvation or of perdition is as extensive as the human world itself. In other words, the history of salvation is not restricted exclusively to the religion of Israel or to christianity, but is, because of Christ, an event of universal significance.

It is, however, also possible to dispute the extent to which we may speak of an authentic revelation in this connection outside the sphere of public revelation. In itself, God's inward appeal to us through grace may only be called revelation in its outward manifestation, for it always comes to us from outside—'from what is heard' (Rom 10:17). Outside Israel and christianity there is an anonymous, and therefore vague and ambiguous, though undoubtedly existent, *auditus exterior* ('hearing from outside'): the world of creation as the translation of God's inward communication to man. The whole of secular
[006] human life thus somehow makes explicit what God's inward offer of grace means for us, namely, that God is our salvation. What is brought about in the secular world is the same as what is brought about in the concrete appearance of the same saving will of God, that is, in the man Jesus, with the difference that the first is vague, ambiguous, easy to misinterpret and therefore frequently misinterpreted, whereas the second cannot be misunderstood. Only Christ is the absolutely clear saving will of God. Although a presentiment of this saving

will was felt outside Israel and christianity (in grace), its true aspect was only seen in Christ That is why we refer to a revelation in the whole of human history, a revelation which is truly supernatural but anonymous, and indeed to the anonymous revelation of Christ himself, incomplete and therefore open to misinterpretation. This is not an a priori deduction, but the implication of a twofold (catholic) christian truth that the possibility of salvation exists (in Christ) for all men, even if they are historically and concretely not confronted with christianity, and that salvation is impossible without faith (see Heb 11:6). Faith is man's surrender to divine revelation. On a basis, then, of the absolute necessity of faith for salvation, God's universal will to save includes the real possibility that all men, wherever they live, may accept salvation by (anonymous) faith, and thus be anonymously confronted with God's saving revelation. In other words,

> In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways; *yet* he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good... [Acts 14:16-17.]

This was said of the concrete and living God.

2. THE HISTORY OF SALVATION AND THE PROPHETIC MESSAGE [007]

A. *In Israel.* Against the background and in the climate of this universal, anonymous invitation to communion with the living God, God began to clarify, as it were in an official manner, the meaning of his saving will, and he did this in Israel. Although we must always take care to assess the phenomenon of Israel as something which is distinct and independent from the religions of the ancient Near East, we must at the same time not use this as a reason for denying all continuity between Israel and the surrounding, anonymously supernatural religions. Anonymous revelation became in Israel a particular, concrete and 'public' revelation, deriving the elements through which it found expression from the religious manifestations of 'universal revelation'. Judgement was at the same time pronounced by the particular revelation of Israel on the non-Israelitic religions, in which human religious consciousness had tried to give a concrete but ambiguous form to universal revelation.

Israel's history of salvation is distinguished from the universal history of salvation by the presence of the prophetic message in Israel's history. The word of God which, speaking, makes the history of salvation, became, via the prophets of Israel, a word that interpreted Israel's history at its saving value. By virtue of the critical function of Israel's prophets, who spoke in the name of the God of salvation but also had their roots in Israel's faith, this word brought divine revelation into the history of Israel in an unambiguous manner. It is therefore in the revelation of the word that the formal distinction between

Israel's particular and 'public' revelation and universal and anonymous revelation is to be found.

[008] That this divine word was heard in Israel and not elsewhere points moreover to a particular election of this people with Christ in view. It is not that the 'covenant' as such, the intersubjective relationship of a people with its God, was peculiar to Israel. The religions of Israel's neighbours were also familiar with a kind of 'covenant' with their God—it was the will of the living God that all should be saved, and Israel herself was aware that she had not been chosen because of her own merits. Many of the Old-Testament prophets recognized that God could have called another pagan people. But the fact that the revelation of the word occurred precisely in Israel points to God's particular concern with the history of this people. Although Israel did not become conscious of the universal saving significance of her election as a mediation for all men until late in her history, the history of her salvation was nonetheless—seen in the perspective of Christ—a veiled pre-revelation of the mystery of Christ. This is so precisely because the history of salvation was 'accompanied' in Israel by the message of the prophets, in which salvation became transparent. God's saving activity became visible and tangible as acts of God in history because of the word, and always with Christ in view.

Thus, although revelation is fundamentally situated in Yahweh's activity for the salvation of his people, and therefore in the history of Israel, the saving value of this history was only interpreted by the prophetic message. Israel's saving history gained its full and clear meaning as revelation when Israel listened to the message of the prophets. God's saving activity is not only a divine action, but also a divine interpretation of this action, in and through the prophetic message. The secular event of Israel's exodus from Egypt thus has a real saving significance, and it does not have this only in the theological

[009] reflection of the pious. As a secular historical event the exodus itself is a saving act of God, a revelation of salvation. But this saving act only becomes de facto an aspect of *our* history, i.e, a part of our consciousness and reflection, in and through the word. Yahweh said to Moses:

> I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; ... I have come down to deliver them. [Ex 3:7-8.]

It is in this word that God's saving act, accomplished in the historical fact itself, and his revelation of himself formally became for us revelation. God's saving activity—revelation in reality—, and his word—revelation in word—, are therefore indissolubly united to each other in the one concept of revelation. Both are essential ingredients of the one divine revelation. It may be regarded as characteristic that the fundamental saving events of the Jewish people were marked by the appearance, whether before, during, or after these events, of a

prophetic figure who interpreted Israel's national history in the light of her consciousness of faith, in which these prophets were themselves involved. The prophetic message threw light on the presence and the content of the saving act and, if the message preceded the events, even brought about the presence of a saving fact. It was precisely because salvation was revealed in a veiled manner in an event belonging strictly to this world, that is, in Jewish history, that the unerring recognition of the fact as a fact of salvation required the prophetic message. The word thus forms an integral part of the manifestation of God's saving activity. It is, of course, true that God did not simply say something about salvation. He also accomplished salvation within history. But, if this history was to be experienced as saving history, he had to interpret its meaning [010] in and through the message of the prophets. The history of salvation, or God's saving activity as revelation, was for this reason an interpreted history, interpreted under a divine guarantee.

B. *In Christ.* If divine revelation has an essential bearing upon God's saving love for man, then this divine saving love for man in history of its very nature means promise and faithfulness. (See Deut 7:8-10.) The revelation-in-word therefore stands in the sign of the promise and its fulfilment, and man's temporal and spatial situation is the material with which God shows his love and invites man to respond to this love. As an event consisting essentially of dialogue between God and man, revelation, because of man's position in a world of fellow human beings and things in which he makes history, is of its very nature accomplished in history. It is therefore impossible to separate God's elective love from man's association with this world in which he makes history. The history of mankind's salvation, in the form in which this became clear for the first time in the history of Israel, was—seen in the perspective of the mystery of Christ—in Israel a problematic reality, since God did not speak his definitive word in Israel. Israel's history merged into the coming of the Son of God into the history of our world. As an act of God in historical form, the whole of Jesus' human life was revelation. From his dialogue with the Father the Son entered our human history, which thereby became, because of Jesus' human freedom, definitive saving history. But the definitive entry of this salvation in Christ into our history can be historically recognized only in the prophetic message of the same Christ, and only by those who believe in this message. It is only through the revelation of Christ's word that the saving significance of the [011] revelation-in-reality which has been accomplished in the life and death of Christ becomes accessible to us historically in faith. It is precisely because salvation offers itself to us as a supernatural reality in the form of an earthly, secular reality—the humanity of Christ—that this saving reality appears as

given and as revealed to us in the word.[1] The manifestation of the historical appearance of salvation in Christ thus includes Christ's prophetic message as an essential element in its constitution.

3. THE HISTORY OF SALVATION, THE WORD, AND THE SACRED BOOKS

A. From her history of salvation and the word, there emerged in Israel a consciousness of salvation, a consciousness that it was God's special people. Throughout the course of its history, the nation became more and more deeply aware of its religious significance and of its being the people of God. In this way, living traditions developed in Israel, and these traditions, together with its history of salvation and the word, formed a single whole constituting Israel as the people of God. Israel, however, frequently interpreted its history wrongly, in an all too human way. The prophetic message therefore acted as a constant critical authority in Israel, sifting what was authentic in these traditions from what was not authentic.

The sacred books of Israel gradually emerged against this background of saving history and traditions, brought about or critically sifted by the message of the prophets, and it was in these books that Israel's consciousness of salvation was reflected via the critical interpretation of the prophets. These
[012] books appeared with the divine guarantee that this written expression of Israel's consciousness of salvation was a faithful reflection of the saving plan that God himself wished to realize in his people. The inspiration of these writings was therefore an extension of the divine and interpretative element expressed in the prophetic message, which in its turn was also supported by Israel's consciousness of salvation. In this sense, the inspiration of these books was, on the one hand, a personal charism, peculiar to the sacred writer himself. On the other hand, however, the sacred writer wrote precisely as a member of the people of God and in the service of this people. The inspired written word must therefore be seen, via the prophetic message, in association with Israel's history of salvation. The scriptural message thus had its roots deep in Israel's history. As Renckens rightly says:

> What lay behind the whole of Israel's national life was the inspiration which proceeded from this mystery, and which gave form and shape to the great diversity of material resulting from historical events and the various statements of the people.[2]

B. A similar process occurred in the apostolic church in connection with the salvation brought about by the man Jesus. The saving event and the word of

[1] See E. Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament,* London 1963, 117-22.
[2] H. Renckens, *The Religion of Israel,* London 1967, 40.

Christ, received, experienced, and heard by the apostolic church, in which the idea developed among the early christian community that it was the redeemed people of God and the church of the Lord, eventually found their way, via the preaching and the witness of the apostles, into the holy scripture of the New Testament. On the one hand the hagiographers of the New Testament wrote as members of the church which was being built up, but on the other the apostolic [013] message and the literature of the New Testament were at the same time the interpretative element by means of which the saving significance of the mystery of Christ, as this was experienced in the early church, was authentically proclaimed to the world under a divine guarantee.

Revelation-in-reality, revelation-in-word, and holy scripture thus form one single whole. Scripture provides us with an infallible and precise expression of the revelation as this was revealed in God's saving activity in Christ, in a veiled manner in Christ's prehistory in the Old Testament, and indeed even in the remote prehistory of the whole of mankind. Scripture is an essential element of the redeeming mystery of Christ as divine revelation.

4. THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH AND ITS SCRIPTURE AS OPPOSED TO THE POST-APOSTOLIC CHURCH

A. The apostolic church read the Old Testament in the light of the event of Christ. In this sense, the books of the Old Testament belonged to the books of the church of Christ. The Old Testament certainly had an independent significance of its own for Israel, but it was the beginning of a work, the last sentence of which was completed in the New Testament, and this final sentence elucidated the initial sentence. In this context, it is important to note that the Old Testament only discloses its full meaning when faced with the saving reality of Christ.[3] Many different biblical meanings in the Old Testament escape notice outside this contact with Christ. We should certainly not assume that the [014] apostolic church read things into the Old Testament that were not there. On the contrary, nothing more was read into the words than they in fact said. It is simply that the deepest meaning of the books of the Old Testament was discovered in the apostolic church—a meaning which was only apparent to those who, in faith and because of the apostolic witness, were confronted with the reality of the mystery of Christ. The words of holy scripture therefore also have a value which transcends their meaning within their contemporary context, since scripture must always be a message for the present time.

[3] An interesting analysis of this is provided by, for example: R. Bijlsma, *Schriftuurlijk schriftgezag*, Nijkerk 1959; and C. H. Dodd, *The Old Testament in the New*, London 1952.

What scripture has to tell us is the divinely guaranteed apostolic expression of the single and non-recurrent apostolic contact with the earthly and glorified reality of Christ. It was in the apostolic period, and only in this period, that redemption was definitively brought about, even though the eschatological manifestation of redemption did not end in the apostolic age. Revelation, too, was thus definitively brought about and in that sense closed. The history of salvation of course continued, but the definitive statement of God's plan with the whole of human history had been made. The public revelation-in-word closed with the completion of the great event of the resurrection of the dead Christ. A definitive interpretation of human history was thus provided in scripture. We can expect no other judgement on history than the judgement passed on it by the death and resurrection of Christ and proclaimed in scripture.

Clearly, then, the history of salvation that followed the event of Christ's resurrection had a different meaning from that which preceded this event. Revelation—definitively brought about, closed, and therefore brought to
[015] fullness—acted as a norm in the life of the church. (This is of course the reason why the college of bishops, headed by the successor to St Peter, did not assume all the rights of Peter and the apostles.) Scripture is the 'covering letter' accompanying the mystery of the redemption brought about by God in the man Jesus, and it is clear that God intended it to be the lasting document accompanying this definitive saving event. In its later life the whole of the church, including the ecclesiastical or hierarchical office of that church, would have to refer to the apostolic church with its scripture. The apostolic church is the canon of the church's faith, the norm of the whole of the church's life, and consequently scripture is also the canon and norm of the church's life of faith because of its apostolic character. The apostolic church together with its scripture is therefore the *norma non normanda*—the norm in its own right—of the whole of the post-apostolic church. Since scripture belongs to the phase in the history of salvation in which the apostolic tradition was constituted, it is, as the written tradition of the college of apostles, the Magna Carta against which the life and the confession of the church must always be verified.

B. On the other hand, however, it is not possible to give an independent value to this 'covering letter', as if salvation were to be found exclusively in scripture. It is generally the case that truth is not to be found above all and formally—I say explicitly, *formally*—in a book, but in the consciousness of a living human community, insofar as this community is directed towards reality, which ultimately is the truth. This is also the case in regard to religious truth. Saving truth is the meaningful content of the life of faith of the entire church, which
[016] recognises itself in scripture. The living reality is always richer than the written expression of this reality, at least as far as its literal and explicit meaning is

concerned. But 'his written expression in itself contains a dynamism which embraces an inner reference to the fullness of the saving truth. Scripture is, after all, the word of God in human form. The divine word, thus given human form, transcends the directly analysable sense of these human words, which thus go beyond their purely human meaning and refer objectively beyond themselves: this is the *sensus plenior* of scripture, that is, the deepest meaning of the word of God, which is only very gradually made fully explicit within the life of the church. The revelation-in-word is directed, through the medium of the history of salvation and therefore through the medium of scripture as well, to the whole of humanity, and inwardly to the heart of each individual, including ourselves, who live in the church today. This means that scripture has, so to speak, a double context: its context within the apostolic church, and its present-day context. For scripture is the record and the fundamental, divinely-guaranteed expression of our present-day faith as well. Thus through the centuries the church, constantly deriving its life and faith from the bible, has always been in process of reclaiming the more implicit meaning of scripture, on a basis of the grace of faith which empowers us to be 'sympathetic' to the divine meaning of the bible's human words. This development has never resulted, and will never result, in the discovery of any new dogmas or revelations: any such we should have to find elsewhere than in scripture, as though the apostles had ignored the bible and confided some truths of faith to us in secret. The apostolic tradition which grew into scripture will always be the expression constituting the apostles' own, and thus our own, consciousness of faith, though this can never be adequately put into words or into writing. [017]

This consciousness of faith, which, through the grace of faith, is based on the totality of revelation, leads to a deeper understanding of the divine meaning of the human, scriptural word in direct proportion to the extent to which the church lives in history in the light of the explicit statement of the bible, in faithful contact with the saving reality itself. In this sense, the life of christianity does not depend exclusively on the *sola scriptura.* Christ does not confront us exclusively with the sacred books, addressing us at the same time, inwardly and personally, through the testimony of his Spirit in accordance with the inclination of the grace of faith. We are also made citizens of the kingdom of God and members of Christ's body in the 'sacrament of faith', called by Gregory of Nyssa the 'first *traditio*'. It is clear, then, that the concept *traditio non scripta,* as opposed to holy scripture, is wrongly translated as 'oral tradition'. This translation is one-sided and incomplete, since it is not primarily a question of an 'oral' but of an 'unwritten' tradition, and this is first and foremost the handing on of the saving reality itself, through which the christian comes into contact not just with the apostolic word but with the saving reality which is indicated by the word and can only be experienced reflectively in the power of

the word. The celebration of the mystery of the eucharist, the christian's prayerful contact with the reality of salvation, and his reception into the living charity of the christian community all form part of the so-called 'unwritten' traditions. What has been handed down to us, for example, in connection with the eucharist, is not simply the scriptural account or a doctrine about the
[018] eucharistic mystery, but the reality itself of the eucharist. And it is in contact with this reality that christians are able to come to a deeper understanding of the meaning of the eucharist and to explicate it more fully.

A comparison may help to make this clearer. In the earliest church, the gospel of St Matthew, read and interpreted in the light of apostolic experience and of association with the mystery of Christ, disclosed the content of this saving mystery by an appeal to the Old Testament, which yielded its deepest mystery in contact with the living and definitive reality of salvation. In the same way, involvement in the saving reality of the glorified Lord living in the church is the only sphere in which the inner meaning of the New Testament can be fully understood. Our association with the reality of salvation is always differently situated in accordance with our changing circumstances. 'Alongside' scripture, but never independent of it, we must therefore distinguish an element that, as such, cannot be traced back to the scriptural element. This is our living involvement in the saving reality itself, in the charity of the christian community, in the worship of the church, in prayer, and so on. It is true that this living contact is only brought about in faith, and thus when we believe in God's word and in scripture. But this does not mean that there is only contact with Christ in the word. There is in fact a contact in reality, although this only becomes explicitly conscious in belief in the word. Here too, revelation-in-reality and revelation-in-word are indissolubly united, and a denial of the validity of one of these elements makes the other meaningless. The inexhaustible meaning of scripture has always been, and will continue to be,
[019] more fully disclosed in the experiential knowledge of the church throughout the centuries in contact with the saving reality itself, of which the scriptures form an essential part. This does not imply that our association with the saving reality results in our reading more into scripture than the words themselves say. It does, however, mean that, in our contact with the saving mystery, the inner significance of the 'covering letter' is bound to emerge with greater and greater clarity. This saving mystery is itself the *sensus plenior* of scripture, the 'fuller meaning' of which is precisely the saving reality which is indicated in the human words.

There is, however, a difference between the reading and re-interpretation of the Old Testament in the light of living contact with Christ, as occurred in the case of the sacred writers of the New Testament, and our reading and interpretation of the Old and New Testaments in the light of our

communion-in-faith with the Lord who is present in the church. The New Testament is the 'covering letter' of salvation that has been definitively completed. The possibility of being able to re-interpret this scripture from the point of view of a new phase of salvation is of its own nature excluded, since salvation in Christ is a definitive reality that will never be surpassed. (It is only the eschatological revelation that will go beyond scripture and render it superfluous.) Our association with the saving reality is therefore a communion with the glorified Lord, to whom the scriptures bear witness. That is why the *ephapax,* the unique event of the mystery of Christ, and the apostolic testimony of this event in scripture always act as a norm to the conscious content of our knowledge through contact with the saving reality.

Tradition in the church, which, according to the Council of Trent, should be [020] treated with 'equal reverence' as scripture, is an apostolic, and therefore a biblical, tradition. It is, in other words, the *paradosis* itself of the apostles. But this *paradosis* is a handing on both of realities of salvation, such as the celebration of the eucharist, and of the message which grew into scripture. The whole of the church is thus, even in its teaching office, first and foremost an *ecclesia discens,* a learning church, with regard to what is revealed, before it becomes in its magisterium an *ecclesia docens,* a teaching church, for us. Ignatius of Antioch was acutely aware of this when he wrote that the church had constantly to seek refuge in the scriptures 'tamquam ad carnem Christi' ('as in the body of the Lord'). (See *Ad Philad.* 4, 1.) And in the words of Augustine, which were repeated again and again through the Middle Ages,

> Everything that we need for our life of faith and our moral life can be found in what is stated explicitly in scripture.[41]

The whole of the church's life, in other words, ecclesiastical tradition, must refer at all times to the apostolic church with its scriptures as to its norm, if it is to remain pure in its living growth, if it is to be revived and even if its theological expression is to be reformed and its perhaps one-sided religious experience is to be re-orientated. In this connection, reformed christianity, drawing its sustenance from the explicit testimony of the bible, is a constant admonition to us catholics, and often a legitimate protest.

[4] *De doctrina christiana,* II, 14 (*PL* 34,42): 'In iis quae aperte in scripturis posita sunt, inveniuntur illa omnia quae continent fidem moresque vivendi.'

[021] 5. SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE

Revelation in word and deed is not handed down within the church in a mechanical way, like a dead thing passed on from hand to hand. It is, on the contrary, essentially linked with its living subject, the church, consisting of the living people of God headed by the ecclesiastical office, both of which are under the guidance of the Spirit of the heavenly Lord. The entire church is subject to tradition—the church which prays and lives in faith, hope, and love, the church which celebrates the liturgical mysteries, the church which is apostolically effective in its office and in its people and the church which reflects on its faith. The entire church carries out this tradition, but each part of the church does this in its own place and in its own way, the laity as the people of God and the office of the church in its hierarchical leadership. In addition, the ecclesiastical office as a whole also has a critical function. Everything that comes about and is brought to light within the life of the church must be carefully considered according to its apostolic and biblical content. It is true that this consideration is also the task of everyone in the church, both laypeople and those holding office, but it is the exclusive function of the teaching office of the church finally to judge whether we are faced, in connection with any definite reaction on the part of the people of the church, with an infallible, apostolic, and biblical reaction, or with a human—and perhaps all too human —reaction.[5] In this sense, the church's teaching office is the judge of our faith, but it is this because it is itself
[022] governed by the norm of scripture. The magisterium of the church does not, therefore, stand above scripture, but it does stand above our interpretation of scripture. According to the catholic view, then, scripture has a critical function with regard to the concrete and empirical appearance of the church. It is fundamentally Christ himself who interprets scripture through his Spirit, active in the entire church and in a special way in the office of the church.

The infallibility of the church's faith—an infallibility in which the church's faith, the charism of the college of bishops, and the official charism of the pope as the head of this college form an indissoluble unity—is based upon the *ephapax,* the definitive character of the christian mystery of salvation with its accompanying document, scripture, beyond which we can never go. In other words, this infallibility has an eschatological basis.

> The word of the Lord abides for ever. That word is the good news which was preached to you [in the gospel]. [1 Pet 1:25; see also Is 40:8.]

[5] See the Pastoral Letter of the Dutch bishops, Christmas 1960, French translation: *Le sens du Concile,* Bruges and Paris, 1961.

The word of God abides for ever in Christ, the *eschaton.*

> I am sure that he [i.e, Christ] is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me. [2 Tim 1:12.]
> [And] when the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. [Jn 16:13.]

Those holding office in the church are only in the service of the faith of the redeemed people of God:

> 'I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus...'
> For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. [Rev 19:10.]

In Israel it was possible for the people of God as a whole to be unfaithful to God, because salvation had at this time still not been brought about definitively. But against the background of the eschatological accomplishment [023]
of salvation in Christ, it is, in the catholic view, impossible for the redeemed people of God, the church, to falter as the church, since, if this were to happen, the eschatological character of accomplished salvation would be brought into desperate straits. In the perspective of this imperishable or unfailing quality of the 'faith of the church' ('the powers of death shall not prevail against it'), we may regard the charism of infallibility of the whole office in the church as an implication of the eschatological, definitive salvation (reality, word, and scripture) for the time between the resurrection and the parousia of the Lord.[6] This echatologically-based infallibility of the church's faith is also parallel to the so-called *opus operatum* character of sacramental sanctification, of which the imperishable foundation of the church as the primordial sacrament is the eschatological basis. Christ situated the fullness of the diaconate of sanctification in the church, the fruit of his redemption. The imperishable quality of this diaconate, on a basis of the definitive accomplishment of salvation, is given concrete form in the unfaltering saving efficacity of the church's sacraments for those who believe in Christ. The word and the sacraments endure because of their eschatological foundation. What is called the 'jurisdictional power' of the ecclesiastical office—really a 'service'—only refers to the manner in which the word and the sacraments are legitimately administered in the Catholic Church.

The infallibility of the 'faith of the church' (and all the mutually interacting elements implied in this, especially the infallibility of the church's office in [024]
'matters of faith and morals') may therefore be traced back, not to a fixed possession of the church on its own account, but to the power of Christ as the

[6] This infallibility is thus based on Christ's word itself, both horizontally, as an *anamnesis* with regard to the scriptures, and vertically, as borne by the living Lord. See chapter 2, 'The Lord and the preaching of the apostles', on pp. [027-035] below.

Lord who holds the church definitively in his hand. This infallibility is therefore a grace which visibly manifests itself in the church.

The limits of the infallibility of the church's authority will also be clear from this. This infallibility is a charism that preserves the whole deposit of faith throughout the entire life of the church on earth until the parousia. It is, however, no guarantee that the church will experience all the aspects of the faith at their precise hierarchical value at all periods of its life. The imperishable existence of the church, of which this infallibility is an implication, should not be regarded as something static. Whenever attention is directed in the church to one particular detail in one definite period of the church's existence rather than to the dynamic inviolability of the whole treasury of faith, the limits of this infallibility begin to reveal themselves. Although I cannot go into a detailed analysis of these limits here, I should like to indicate at least one of the functions of the church's teaching authority: its function in the definition of dogma. This function is subordinate to the formal mission of the teaching office of the church (Mt 28:18-20) to preserve and to hand down the testimony of the apostles in a pure, living form which will appeal to men at all times. The situation frequently necessitates a more precise definition, but here the apostolic tradition, the *paradosis,* acts as an objective norm to the church's magisterium, and the carrying out of this function of defining dogma is subordinate to the church's task of preserving the apostolic testimony itself. The definition of dogma is
[025] never an isolated activity—dogma is not defined for the sake of the definition! There is, moreover, always a danger present in any definition of dogma, however necessary and beneficial it may be in certain situations, in that a precise definition of one aspect of faith may lead to the obscuring of another, complementary aspect. History provides evidence of the fact that one definition frequently requires another at a later period, the second definition integrating the 'one-sidedness' of the first into a more perfect whole. Hilary, for example, alluded to the awkward situation into which the church was often forced whenever it was obliged to define a datum of faith dogmatically in order to combat error.[7]

Conclusion

It will consequently be clear that I regard as alien to Catholicism both any exclusive assertion of the *sola scriptura,* the *sola traditio,* or the *solum magisterium,* and similarly any affirmation of two or three parallel and independent sources. Both the scriptures and tradition are necessary to the life of the church. But, on the other hand, scripture and tradition also need the church and each other if they are to be recognised as canonical scriptures and as authentically apostolic

[7] De Trinitate, II, 2 (*PL* 10, 51).

tradition. Apostolic scripture is not scripture as, for example, Marcion interpreted it, but as it is interpreted in the church of Christ. The church's supervision of scriptural exegesis does not place it above scripture, but merely points to the church's recognition of the exclusively apostolic principle as the norm of christian faith and of life in the church. And this recognition of the apostolic authority with regard to our faith means in the last resort to [026] recognition of the *auctoritas,* the power and authority, of God as the only and the exclusive criterion of catholic faith—the Father sent his Son and manifested himself in him, and Christ sent his apostles, who became the foundation of the church.

Chapter 2

THE LORD AND THE PREACHING OF THE APOSTLES

Revelation is both a saving event and a preaching which bears upon this event. In the *kerygma* (proclamation) of the apostles, the reality of salvation appears as something that is given to us. The completion of revelation in Christ therefore includes a completion and a closing of the apostolic message as the lasting foundation and the norm of the post-apostolic church. From the catholic point of view as well, the apostolic *kerygma* has to some extent to be accepted as a unique and nonrecurrent event with regard to the apostolic preaching of the church, which has to refer to it as to its norm.

If we are to provide a satisfactory answer to the question of what the apostolic preaching as characterised by Christ's dignity as Lord is[1], and what the method and the means of this preaching are, then we are well advised to [028] divide this question into two parts, and consider firstly the preaching of the apostles themselves and secondly the preaching of the church.

1. THE KYRIOS IN THE 'KERYGMA' OF THE APOSTLES

The consequence of the mutual implication of saving event and preaching was that the completion of the mystery of Christ—on the appointment of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh as Kyrios—inaugurated the closing of divine revelation, and was at the same time the foundation of the preaching which bears upon the mystery of Christ. In other words, the preaching of the apostles belongs to the constitutive phase of revelation. It is, together with the saving reality which it passes on to the church, the lasting norm for the whole of the church's further life.

[1] This was the theme discussed in January 1959 at the annual congress of the Union of Students in Theological Faculties in the Netherlands. This paper aimed to provide the congress with a schematic outline of the perspective in which this question may be answered from the catholic point of view.

Nonetheless, an unmistakable growth can be discerned between Christ's ascension to the Father and the end of the early apostolic period of the church with the sacred writings produced at this time. The two possibilities that may have occurred or that did take place then can be ignored here.[2] The very fact of this growth in itself forces us to consider the question of the vital relationship between the activity of Christ as Lord and the *kerygma* of the apostles, a relationship which was both horizontal and vertical.

[029] 1. The apostolic testimony of the historical Christ who became the Kyrios

The condition that was laid down when a successor was found to the apostle Judas indicates that an immediate encounter with Christ was the basis of the preaching of the apostles.[3]

> We are witnesses to all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. [Acts 10:39.]

The climax of this encounter with Christ was in the apostles' immediate experience of Christ's dignity as Lord, in other words, their experience of the risen Christ who appeared to them. Testifying to the power and the *parousia* of Christ, the apostles did not resort to cleverly-thought-out fairy tales, but to the fact that they had witnessed Christ's glory with their own eyes.[4] The essence of this is that they had been immediate witnesses of the risen Christ. Their association with the earthly Christ established above all the continuity between the historical Servant of God and the Kyrios who appeared to them. The Kyrios to whom they bore witness was identical with the Son of Man who had been known to many men and who had been crucified by Pilate. (This is the basic plan of the apostolic *kerygma.)* It was this witness, based on personal experience, that made the *kerygma* of the apostles unique and gave a distinct meaning to the whole of the early apostolic church as such, borne up as it was by an apostolic
[030] office that had, until this point, been called in a special way.[5]

Viewed horizontally, then, the *kerygma* of the apostles was directly linked with the Kyrios, that is, with the appearances of the risen Messiah within the earliest church.

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[2] These are, firstly, that not everything had been revealed with Christ's ascension (those who maintain this thesis base their argument on Jn 16:12-14 and 14:25-6); and secondly that the whole of revelation was completed with Christ's departure, with the result that the growth of the mystery of faith in the early church is on a par with a development in tradition or dogma. This second claim is based on Jn 15:15; Acts 1:3; Mt 28:19-20.

[3] Acts 1:21-3; 8:31; 1:8; 2:32; 3:15; 5:27-32; 10:39, 41-2; Lk 24:48; 1:2; Jn 15:27; 1 Jn 1:1-3.

[4] 2 Pet 1:16; Jn 1:14; Jn 1:1-3.

[5] I do not propose to deal here either with the problem of the relationship between the 'Twelve' and the other apostles such as Paul, or with the question of the other apostles' witness of the resurrection.

2. The direct activity of the Kyrios in the apostles' preaching

Vertically too, there was a vital link between the Kyrios end the preaching of the apostles. Christ's 'sitting on the right hand of the Father' was the very heart of the early christian confession of faith. For the early church, Christ was a personal and present reality, and not simply someone who had brought about redemption in the past, nor even simply the person whose eschatological *parousia* was impatiently awaited. For the first christians, Jesus was, on the contrary, a person living in the present who came into contact at the present moment with those who believed in him. It was precisely because they felt Christ to be present in this way that the early christians longed for the full presence of the *parousia*. They experienced daily the Lord's personal leadership of the young church through his Spirit, whose constant and active concern they experienced vividly in their midst.

> Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out *this which you see and hear.* [Acts 2:33.]

It was only as the Kyrios that Christ was to send the Spirit of whom it was said that 'he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you' (Jn 14:26).

3. The unity of these two moments

[031]

What the apostles did in their capacity as apostles, they brought about together with the Spirit of the Lord. 'It has seemed good to the *Holy Spirit* and *to us...*' (Acts 15:28).[6] What did the apostles do in connection with the 'proclamation of the mystery of salvation'? This may be summed up schematically under three main categories—the preaching, or proclamation, of the apostles *(kerygma),* their witness or testimony of salvation *(martyrion)* and finally their teaching *(didachē).* The *kerygma* was the proclamation of the good news that God had, in Christ, intervened as a redeemer. The *kerygma* was the proclamation in the Spirit of the saving event, one of the integrating elements of the constitutive phase of the revelation of salvation. The *martyrion* had a juridical nuance, and was the apostolic act in which the apostles bore witness to what they had seen and heard to the forum of history and the world.[7] This testimony was not a kind of photographic reproduction, but a result of the apostles' dialogue with what was revealed; in other words, it was a revelation that had been reflected on. (Hence the difference between the vision of the synoptic gospels and that of the

[6] See also Acts 3:9; 4:31; 5:3-4; 6:3-5; 7:55; 8:29, 39; 10:19; Jn 14:26; 15:26-7;16:13-15; Mt l0:18-20; Mk 8:11; Lk 21:13ff.
[7] John 1:14; 15:27; 19:35; 1 Jn 1:1-3; 1 Pet 5:1; 2 Pet 1:16; Heb 2:3.

Johannine gospel.) Finally, the *didachē,* proceeding from the mystery of Christ and the developing church, disclosed the meaning and the consequences of this revelation of salvation—its implications, its elucidation in the light of the Old Testament, the limits dividing it from false teaching, and so on. Light is also
[033] thrown on the demands of life in the world by this being in Christ. The *didachē* included the entire incarnation of the apostles' faith in the concrete world of their time, together with the *paraclēsis* of the 'holy commandment delivered them' (2 Pet 2:21)—the ethics of the gospel.

This multifarious apostolic work of preaching was, on the one hand, a fully human activity and, on the other, an activity carried out by the living Kyrios himself . It was the Lord who spoke and acted in the active *paradosis* or tradition of the apostles, their *kerygma, martyrion,* and *didachē.* This is why St Paul was able to say that what he had received from others—from other apostles, that is—was identical with what he had received from the Kyrios. This does not, however, mean that there was only a horizontal link between the *kerygma* and the Kyrios—there was also a vertical link with the living Lord. The encounter with the earthly and glorified Christ, as the point at which the apostolic church began to exist, had the same meaning and content as the present speaking and acting of God in the Kyrios. In other words, the tradition of the apostles included both the meaning of the mystery of Christ which had been completed in history, and with which the apostles had been directly confronted, and the meaning of the Lord's present speaking in the hearts of the apostles and in the church. In the constitutive phase of revelation, then, the apostles mediated in the making present of the saving mystery that had been accomplished in Christ. The Lord's hidden activity in and through the preaching of the apostles established, together with the apostles' immediate testimony of the mystery of Christ that they had seen and heard, the inviolable deposit of faith that acted as a norm to the later church. Both the inward speaking of the Lord and the external
[032] material from the apostolic tradition—which in its turn came from the apostles' direct association with the earthly Christ and the risen Christ who had appeared to them—together formed the preaching of the apostles. The Lord himself spoke in the apostolic preaching, and this was consequently not merely an *anamnesis* of the words of the earthly Christ and the risen Lord during his appearances to the apostles. In this *anamnesis* the living Christ spoke here and now to the apostles. The apostles' handing down of what they had previously heard and experienced of the Christ event took place while they were listening to the living and active words addressed to them at the present by the invisible Kyrios. The apostolic *kerygma* is therefore the historical form in which the

Lord's actual inner speech appeared, as the glorified continuation of Christ's preaching.[8]

2. THE KYRIOS IN THE 'KERYGMA' OF THE CHURCH

The early apostolic church had a certain unique and non-recurrent quality, but this quality is also to be found in the structure of the post-apostolic church. Here too, a process of human tradition is taking place—a process which is at the same time the expression in time and space of the speaking here and now of the living Lord. Christ's present speaking in the church's preaching of the word on the one hand and inwardly in our hearts through grace on the other is not a double address, but one and the same address, in which what was said at an earlier time is really included in what is said here and now. Christ's power as [034] Lord is revealed first and foremost in the church and her preaching.

The whole life of the church, from the early apostolic period until the *parousia,* is ruled by the Kyrios, who 'builds up the body of the church' through the mediation of his Spirit and of the church's apostolic office. The preaching of the church is a manifestation of both forms of mediation in their coincidental activity. This preaching in word and deed is the manifestation in time of the revelation already completed in the Kyrios.

The distinction between the preaching of the apostles and that of the church *(kerygma, martyrion,* and *didachē)* is not a difference in authority, infallibility, and value as a norm. They differ in that the outwardly proclaimed fact of faith, which is the content of what is said here and now by the Lord, originated in the apostolic church in the apostles' direct and personal testimony of Christ's earthly humanity and of the Kyrios who appeared to them. This immediacy, which was intended by God, gave a unique and non-recurrent character to the preaching of the apostles, and thus came within the constitutive phase of revelation. As such, the apostle was a historical figure within the plan of salvation. As invested with plenary powers by Christ, and from his own historical experience—and thus from his association and dialogue—with the Christ who lived and died on earth, but who also rose and appeared to the apostles on earth, the apostle bore witness here and now to the speaking Kyrios, while at the same time he bore co-testimony to the true meaning and content of what took place for our salvation. It was this fundamental apostolic preaching, prepared by the Spirit, that acted as a norm for the post-apostolic

[8] The 'witnesses' were not only the apostles, but also the Spirit of the Lord; see Jn 15:26-7; Lk 24:48-9; Acts 2:8; 1; Jn 1:1-3; Acts 5:30-2; 1:8; 4:31-3; Jn 16:8. Heb 2:3-4 speaks of a 'co-testimony of God' *(synepimartyrountos tou Theou).*

[035] church. The apostles were, therefore, in a very distinctive way, the 'pillars of the church'. Their witness was part of the *ephapax* of revelation.

Spoken to here and now by the Kyrios, the apostolic office of the post-apostolic church does not derive the externally provided facts of the historical mystery of Christ from its historical and immediate experience, but from the reality of the early apostolic church. The church's apostolic office acts as a norm for our life of faith only as ruled itself by the norm of the apostolic church, and it is in this way that the church's preaching gives visible form to a continuous speaking here and now by the living Lord. In this latter respect, then, the post-apostolic church is in no way different from the apostolic church. Because of the immediacy of the apostles' experience, the preaching of the apostles formed part of the deposit of faith which is the church's norm in its preaching. The church's preaching thus makes use of the testimony of the Lord both horizontally and vertically. It is in this preaching that the Kyrios continues to bear witness through his Spirit. The Lord's guarantee thus applies not only to the apostolic church, but also to the post-apostolic church. In this way, both the preaching and the whole of the history of salvation of the church is at all times based on the historically past, external revelation, to which the apostolic church bore witness in its life and its scripture, and the church continues to be addressed here and now by the living Kyrios and to be orientated by him towards the *eschaton*.

Chapter 3

REVELATION-IN-REALITY AND REVELATION-IN-WORD

For some christians, christianity is first and foremost a revelation by the word of God. For others, however, its essence is above all to be found in the deification of man through sacramental togetherness with God in Christ. I propose in this chapter to go more deeply into these two complementary aspects of the christian plan of salvation.

1. THE WORD OF GOD AS THE MEDIUM OF REVELATION

1. The 'word of God' as the Old-Testament expression for the God who addressed man personally

It is a remarkable fact that Israel made no distinction between the word and the event or thing that was expressed in words. The Hebrew *dābhār* meant both a spoken or written word and an event in nature or in history. The phrase 'after these words' often meant 'after these things'[1], for words were not only spoken, but also done.[2] Thus, the story of Solomon's life was expressed in scripture by [037] the term, 'the words of Solomon'.[3] A person's life in the Old Testament was the word that he spoke—he war that word. The word was the full manifestation of a person or a thing.

Furthermore, no distinction was made in Israel between the word and the person speaking. Speaking was a mode of being of the person himself. The expression, 'Thus says Yahweh', contains a heavily-charged dynamism. The power of the word was the power of the person who spoke the word, and the power of the word of God was particularly great.[4] God's word was truth and

[1] See, for example, Gn 22:1.
[2] Gn 24:66.
[3] 1 Kings 11:41.
[4] Is 55:10-11; Wisd 18:14-15, etc.

reached its target unerringly, whereas the words of the false gods were lies and ineffectual.[5] A word of God that was not realised was, for Israel, an impossibility.[6] The word of God consequently made history:

> The Lord has sent a word against Jacob, and it will light upon Israel; and all the people will know. [Is 9:8-9.]

The prophetic word, as the word of God in the mouth of man, in a certain sense caused history. As an expression of God's will—'For he commanded and they were created'[7], or, more simply, 'He spoke and it was'—the prophetic word called the future into being.[8] At the same time, it explained the meaning of history—it was the divine interpretation of a natural or historical event in the midst of the people of God. That is why it sometimes happened that the prophecy took place after the event. Whenever the primitive belief, common
[038] among Israel's neighbours, that the word possessed a magic power, gained ground in Israel[9], it evoked a sharp reaction on the part of the prophets, who constantly ascribed the power of the word to the personal power of Yahweh.[10] It was only because the prophet was a 'man of God' that his words were efficacious.[11]

The word of God was the incarnation of God's saving will; that is to say, it coincided with the historical events themselves, and with the natural events that were ordered and guided by God himself for the benefit of the people of God. Nature and history came about through God's word. 'Man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of Yahweh' (Deut 8:3): that is, we live from the word of God.[12] The 'word of God' included every divine activity connected with man and the world. The world, created by Yahweh's word and disrupted by man's sin, was to be re-created by Yahweh's word.

This Old-Testament theology of the *dābhār* (or word) has a deep significance—it points to the personal relationship between God and man. It is not only the God of creation who shows himself, but also the God of salvation and of the covenant. The 'word' showed not only that creation and history were brought about by a creative God and that they had to be interpreted 'theistically', but also, and especially, that they had to be interpreted in the
[039] context of man's personal relationship, his dialogue with God. All these events

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[5] Is 41:22-4.
[6] Deut 18:18-22.
[7] See, for example, Ps 148:5.
[8] Is 9:7; 49:2; 55:10-11; Jer 5:14; 23:29, etc.
[9] Among the many studies devoted to the 'word' among the Semites, see especially L. Dürr, *Die Wertung des göttlichen Wortes in Alten Testament und im antiken Orient*, Leipzig 1937.
[10] See, for example, Ex 22:18; Lev 20:6, 27; Deut 18:9-14; 1 Sam 15:23; 28:3.
[11] l Sam 9:6; 1 Kings 17:24.
[12] See Jer 17:16; Ps 89:35.

were an invitation on God's part to man, whom God addressed personally in them. The world and history were no longer simply a subject for philosophical analysis, they were the subject of a personal dialogue between God and man. This 'word of God' was God himself, insofar as he was calling man to a living communion with him. The word was at the same time the existence of man and the world, viewed as a task and a vocation for man and as a 'notification' to him in his personal relationship with the living God.

Revelation itself is, in this sense, a revelation-in-word, a dialogue. But this dialogue was accomplished both by events in history and by the prophetic utterances that threw light on its meaning. Revelation-in-reality and revelation-in-word are both aspects of one and the same divine speaking, or of the 'word of God'. Although revelation consisted primarily of God's saving activity, and thus of the history of the Jewish people, this history only acquired the full and pregnant significance of revelation when it was understood by the people of God in their awareness of salvation. The divine saving activity, within which history became a history either of salvation or of perdition, was illuminated by the word of the prophet, in whom this dialogue of action met with a clear response. The word revealed to God's people the presence and the meaning of the divine saving activity, and explained the natural and historical event as a personal address on God's part. Because of its supernatural mystery concealed within a profane, or rather a secular, event, this divine saving activity inwardly *demanded* a complementary word. It was therefore only in the prophetic word—the word of the man who heard and understood the inward speaking of God in the historical event—that saving revelation became full self-awareness in the chosen people. The accomplishment of salvation in history was a speaking on the part of God, but the precise meaning of this [040] divine dialogue—in other words, the worldly event as a dialogue with God—had to be interpreted by a human word on the part of the prophet:

> Surely Yahweh our God does nothing, without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets. [Amos 3:7.]
>
> New things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them. [Is 42:9; see also 1 Pet 1:20.]

The Old-Testament theme of the 'roaring of the lion'[13] refers to the prophetic proclamation of future historical events as a judgement of God. Within the general dialogue between God and man through nature and history (which is not simply worldly happenings with a theistic background, but worldly happenings which have their principle in the God of salvation who seeks a

[13] See, for example, Jer 25:30; Amos 3:4-8; Joel 3:16; Hos 11:10.

living communion with man), God's particular speaking in and through the human word finds a place. It is because dialogue, or the word, plays a part of primary importance in human relationships that Israel called God's disclosure of himself to man in nature and history a 'word', a dialogue. This speaking of God, which might in the Old Testament have been to some extent anthropomorphic, acquired its full and pregnant significance in the complete revelation in Christ.

2. The man Jesus—God's address in human form

Christ among us was, in and through his historically situated and conditioned humanity, the revelation of God. He was thus God's word—God himself, the Son, addressing us personally in the man Jesus. God the Son was a personal
[041] fellow man who dealt with us as man to man, at the personal level. Every truly human act on Christ's part was therefore, even more strongly than in the history of the Old Testament, a word spoken by God to man. Moreover, here the dialogue in the proper sense acquired its fullest significance. If Jesus' humanity was the medium of divine revelation, then this implies that Jesus' human word literally acquired a constitutive significance in this revelation. It is clear from the study of anthropology, and in particular from the study of the various phenomena associated with aphasia, that speech is an essential part of a person's incarnation in this world.[14] The human word is the human reality itself as this is manifested in outward expression. It is a mode of human existence. 'Venir au monde, c'est prendre la parole' ('to come into the world is to acquire words, a language').[15] The word is one of the most characteristic modes of human encounter. What man is is expressed in language, and it is in language that man turns to others. Language is essentially man's self-disclosure to others, revelation. If language is essential to man's 'incarnation', then we may expect the human word of Christ to have a constitutive significance in the incarnation of God as redemptive revelation. All anthropomorphism in God's speaking ceases here—God himself personally speaks in the man Jesus, in Jesus' human word. The revelation in reality, which is the person of Christ himself in the totally human form in which he appeared, allowed its meaning and content to
[042] emerge clearly in the human word that this man addressed to us. We must now consider this word of Christ

[14] G. Gusdorf has, for example, made out a very plausible case for this in his book on phenomenology, *La Parole,* Paris 1953. It is, however, difficult to agree in principle with this writer's view of the human person, in which he follows Merleau-Ponty.
[15] Gusdorf, 8.

Jesus' word was God's word, in the form of a human and historically conditioned word. We must consider it in its full human and personal value and power if we are to throw light on the theandric value of the word of Christ.

The word, as an essential element of dialogue, is the means by which the inner world of two persons is opened to each other. It is an expression of the freedom which aims to communicate its concealed value to others and thereby surrender itself. According to Buehler, three principal aspects can be distinguished in human dialogue.[16] (1) *The content:* something is said. The speaker communicates something, explains something, testifies to something, and so on. (2) *The invitation:* somebody is addressed. Speaking is an act directed towards a fellow person. Speaking is addressing someone. The thing with which the speaker is concerned is the matter with which he appeals to or questions his partner in the dialogue. When he speaks, he expects a reaction. Speaking itself is a call to this reaction, an invitation to a definite response. The reaction can take as many different forms as the address itself. The minimum response required is attentive listening. If, however, I express a command when I speak, then what I say is at the same time an appeal to obedience. If I speak suppliantly, then I appeal to my partner's goodwill and expect a favourable response. Among the many other forms of address and response is speaking which bears witness. If I testify to something that the person to whom I am speaking knows nothing or can know nothing about, then my address is an appeal to surrender in faith to my testimony, an invitation directed to my [043] partner in the dialogue, so that he will have faith in me and take me on trust. Speaking which testifies or bears witness therefore contains an invitation to believe. Finally, dialogue also contains a third aspect: (3) *Self-unveiling* —speaking is not only a speaking about something, it is also an expression of oneself, a revelation of oneself and a giving of oneself.

The word of the man Jesus which testifies is also like this—it essentially contains an 'invitation to faith'. But, if the power of the human invitation, directed towards the freedom of a fellow human being, is limited because it is human speaking, this is not the case with Christ—the invitation here is the incarnation of a divine invitation which can address human freedom in its inmost core. The anthropological fact of the effect of the human word retains its full validity, but gains an unsuspected depth because the speaker is now God himself—the Son, God in a human form. The human word of invitation that is addressed to us has the relative value and the impotence of a human influence which is only superficial and powerless before the core of personal freedom. The human word of Christ, on the other hand, penetrates to the most intimate

[16] K. Buehler, *Sprachtheorie*, Jena 1934.

core of our personal freedom, which opens itself to receive it, because Christ's word, his invitation, is a personal act on the part of the Son of God. His human word is de facto able to bring about in us the obedient response in faith. This listening with assent to Christ's word transcends our human powers. When his word de facto arouses in us this response in faith, it at the same time brings about in us the existential basis from which we, still as human beings, can make
[044] our theologal[17] act of faith in his word. The 'invitation to faith', which is inherent in all human testimony, acquires a deeper meaning in Christ's speaking in testimony. Aquinas called this invitation the very essence itself of the light of faith *(lumen fidei)*[18] that is given to us as grace by means of Christ's word. It is only by this inward grace of faith that I know myself, in and through what is spoken by Christ, to be addressed by the living God, and I make an act of faith and trust in Christ's invitation which is the incarnation of the word of invitation, the grace of faith. De la Potterie has, in a painstaking study, indicated the scriptural basis of this thomist view of faith.[19] The 'balm' or chrism is (in some scriptural texts) the word of Christ himself *(fides ex auditu,* 'faith from hearing') as this is brought to our minds by the Holy Spirit *(locutio interna,* 'inward address'). The inward unction is essentially connected with the *ex auditu.* This applied to those who heard the word of Christ directly. This word was human, but it was also the incarnation of an inward grace. Given the inner efficacity of the human saving acts of Jesus, there is no reason at all to give a different explanation for the effect of his speaking, and simply to refer to an accompanying activity of grace. It is really a question of the inward power, which is no different from the power of divine grace itself, that addresses us humanly in the manner of the saving word. The invitation to faith as the inward
[045] element of Christ's speaking is the inviting power of a divine grace in human form. In this sense, Christ's word has a sacramental value just as much as his saving acts. His word is no less a saving act than a physical contact that healed the sick. In both cases it is a question of an effective act of God, although in human form. It is only on this christological basis that the saving mystery of the church's proclamation of the word, especially in the eucharistie service of the word, can be understood.

[17] For the use of theologal see *Christ the Sacrament*, 16, second note [n. 14].
[18] 'An inward instinct of the God who invites' (*ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 9, ad 3; *Quodl.* II, q. 4, a. 1). Thomas often elaborates this doctrine in connection with a scriptural, and especially a Johannine, text. See *EJ*, c. 6, lect. 5: 'instinctus interior impellens et movens ad credendum' ('an inward instinct urging and inducing man to believe').
[19] I. de la Potterie, 'L'onction du chrétien par la foi', *Bbl* 40 (1959), 12-69.

3. The church's proclamation of the word

The apostles did nothing other than simply pass on the word of Christ—they preached the 'word of God'.[20] This does not mean that they proclaimed the word *about* God, but that they proclaimed the word that God himself spoke in Christ[21], that is, the gospel, the word of salvation and redemption that Christ himself spoke in dialogue and in deed. At the same time, Paul called the word of God 'my word'. This means that what the apostles said was at the same time Christ's speaking through the apostle[22]:

> When you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God. [1 Thess 2:13.]
>
> We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. [2 Cor 5:20.]

This identity of the word of Christ and that of the apostles *(qua* apostles) is based on the plenary powers and the mission which the apostles received from Christ—they were given the task and the power to speak the word of God in Christ. For this reason, the proclamation of the word was a *diakonia,* a service and a mission—the 'ministry of the word' (Acts 6:2-4). This ministry of the word is therefore an act of the office of the church.[23] The church's ministry of the word thus implies that the word proclaimed is the word of Christ himself, in the form of the apostolic word. The church's ministry is the self-revelation of Christ, which continues to be alive and effective through the revealing power of the Holy Spirit in the word of the apostles. This is why the church's word is also a power.[24] [046]

It follows, therefore, that just as the word that was spoken personally by Jesus while he was still on earth possessed an inward divine fruitfulness of grace, so also does the church's ministry of the word possess an inward power of grace. The church's word is the personal word of the heavenly Christ in the form of the apostolic word; it is, in other words, the personal word of Christ *in forma ecclesiae* ('in the shape of the church'). The analogy with the sacraments of the church is thus quite clear. The immediately expressive gesture of love of the man Christ is his glorified body. This made Christ's word objective; it was his final word, which through the ages speaks to us of the resurrection from the

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[20] See 2 Cor 2:17; 4:2, etc.

[21] H. Schlier's studies throw considerable light on the idea of the 'word of God' in the New Testament. See 'Die Verkündigung in Gottesdienst der Kirche', *Die Zeit der Kirche,* Freiburg 1956,244-64; *Wort Gottes. Eine neutestamentliche Besinnung,* Würzburg 1962.

[22] See 1 Thess 1:5; 1 Cor 2:4; Rom 2:16; 2 Cor 4:3, etc.

[23] Besides the official ministry of the word, there is also a place for a charismatic proclamation of the word. See, for example, 1 Cor 12:28f.; Eph 2:20; 3:5; 4:11.

[24] Rom 1:16.

[047] dead.[25] Since the ascension, however, we have not been able to see or hear this heavenly sign of love. Within the environment of our life on earth, this effective heavenly expression of love is made visible and audible by Christ in the sacraments and the word of the church. Christ's saving intention, perfectly expressed in his heavenly body, has been made incarnate in the church since the ascension in the church's sacramental rites and in her word. Christ's personal will to save and his personal speaking to man thus form a unity with the church's sacramental act and the word of the church. As the incarnation in the church of a personal word of the God-man, the ministry of the word is also inwardly effective. Here, too, there is much more than simply an accompanying activity of grace—the church's proclamation of the word possesses, as the incarnation of Christ's personal word, a divine saving power. We acknowledge this, for example, after the reading of the gospel at mass: 'Through the words of the gospel may our sins be wiped away'; or when listening to the reading of the Divine Office: 'May the reading of the gospel be for our salvation and protection'. These are not simply the expression of a pious hope— they express a reality of grace.

But the objection will immediately be raised: have I not equated the proclamation of the word and the reading of scripture with the efficacity of the sacraments, and thus made the word of the church, the church's preaching, and the Divine Office an eighth sacrament? Many catholics find this objection a stumbling-block and tend, therefore, to minimise the dynamism, the inward saving power of the ministry of the word. But their objection is based on a misunderstanding. They are forgetting the sacramental structure of the whole
[048] church and of its specifically ecclesial[26] acts, which are all visible signs of grace. The church is the focus of Christ's visible presence of grace on earth. It is the great sacrament from whom all kinds of dynamic sacramental movements proceed. The eucharist, the focal point of Christ's real and active presence among us, is at this centre of the sacramental church. The other six sacraments radiate clearly from this focal point. It is only the preaching of the church that can disclose this mystery to us and enable us truly to believe in it. Illuminated by this word, we see a broad wave of sacramental activity continue to flow outwards—grace is visible for us in all the church's activities, and in the christian life of the faithful as a power attracting others. But, although less pronounced and already flowing away, these sacramental waves still continue to surge in the sacramentals. Finally, this sacramental life ebbs away in the

[25] I have attempted to analyse the structure of this in my article 'Godsdienst en sacrament', *SC* 34 1959), 267-83. This study throws some light on the subject under discussion here.
[26] For the use of *ecclesial* see *Christ the Sacrament,* 57 n. 2; see also Yves Congar, *Lay People in the Church,* London 1957, xxiv n. 2.

reality of the material and historical world of men, which is equally under the influence of Christ, the Lord. All these factors are, *each in their own way,* 'sacraments', that is, true, visible realities, of which the Lord makes personal use in a richly inspired and varied manner in order to orientate men towards God in Jesus Christ. All this means that the grace of Christ does not only come to us inwardly. His grace approaches us, in many different variations, visibly as well. This is the lasting consequence of the incarnation. Through the Son of God's becoming man, the world of men has been included into the personal relationship of God to man and man to God. In union with the inward grace, the whole world of creation has thus become *gratia externa,* the exteriority of grace, that is, grace itself in visible efficacity. The word of the church and the church's ritual sacraments are simply the burning focal points of this [049] world-embracing manifestation of the Lord in what is the concentration of the visible presence of grace—the church, in whom, thanks to the eucharist, Christ is truly *sōmatikōs,* somatically—that is, physically, and therefore personally —present.

It is possible to define the limits of the sacramental nature of the church's word as against those of the ritual sacraments against the background of this broad sacramentalism of the church. 'The word' is the church itself in one of its essential activities. In the manner of the word it thus shares in the essentially sacramental structure of the church. Both the word and the seven sacraments are a personal address on the part of the living Lord through human forms. In both cases, the response can take the form of acceptance or of refusal. But the proper nature of the word and the proper nature of the sacrament will indicate the proper efficacity of these two activities of the church. Leaving aside the special case of the eucharist, the presence of Christ in the word and in the sacrament is not a question of 'more or less', but of a difference in manner. The manner in which the Lord is present in the word and in which he is present in the sacrament differs according to the proper sense and meaning of *word* and *sacrament*. There is a clear difference between the manner of Christ's presence in his own humanity *(in propria carne)* on the one hand and the manner of his presence in the sacrament on the other hand[27], and finally the manner of his presence in the word, although there is, in all three cases, each in its own manner, a real and active presence of Christ himself. Both the modern science of [050] the phenomenology of language (as, for example, in Gusdorf) and the Old Testament show clearly that the word cannot be separated from the person speaking—the word, dialogue or conversation, is a manner of being and of

[27] A further distinction must, of course, be made here between the sacramental presence of Christ in the six sacraments and his real eucharistic presence.

being present of the person himself. The word of Christ is a word of testimony. Consequently it brings us face to face with the presence of Christ himself, but as one bearing witness and inviting us to believe. The real efficacity, then, of the ministry of the word is our obedience in faith[28], which is impossible without our being raised up by grace, since it is God alone who can make us capable of believing. Christ is therefore present, and actively present, in the word of the church, but in the manner of the word that invites us to believe. This invitation is a divine invitation (although it is made in a human form) and because of this it confers on us the power to accept it freely. The church's preaching of the word of God thus possesses an inward power of grace, but—and this must be emphasised—in the manner of the word of testimony, a manner which is of quite a different nature from the efficacity of the ritual sacraments *which presupposes this faith,* although the same basic pattern and the same sacramental structure (a structure which is perceptible in all the specifically ecclesial acts of the church) are present in both. The inward efficacity of the church's word is the 'dynamism' of the person speaking. In this case, it is that of Christ himself, in the form of the word of the church. The divine invitation to believe which is essentially implied in the word of testimony acquires a human incarnation here. This does not, however, invalidate the divine power, but makes it visibly
[051] present and active among us in the word that is spoken by the church or in the word of scripture that is read within the church.

Obedience in faith, the fruit of the ministry of the word, is presupposed in every fruitful reception of a sacrament which, of its very nature, must be a *sacramentum fidei* ('sacrament of faith').[29] Without the saving power of the word, a sacrament cannot in fact be fruitful. This structure points to the inward link between the ministry of the word and the ministry of the sacrament. Since the sacrament is completely fruitful only in the person who is intimately associated in faith with Christ's giving of himself in the sacrament of the church, the ministry of the word is of necessity related to the ministry of the sacrament. Thus, what is commenced in the word is completed in the sacrament. Faith is the *initium salutis,* the beginning of salvation. In the sacrament, salvation is given to us in full. The sacraments confer or intensify 'sanctifying' grace, whereas the church's preaching only confers immediate or 'actual' graces which bring us to obedience in faith. Faith, aroused and made meaningful by the ministry of the word, is the space in which the sacraments

[28] 'Faith comes from what is heard' (Rom 10:17).

[29] I have already analysed this tradition in *De sacramentele heilseconomie.* I, Antwerp and Bilthoven, 1952. Since then, however, a scriptural study has appeared which shows clearly the scriptural basis of this teaching: L. Villette, *Foi et sacrement,* I, Paris, 1959.

must live. That is why Christ entrusted both the ministry of the word and that of the sacrament to the same office.

This, however, is not all. Just as the prophetic word, which pointed to God's personal invitation contained in the saving events, formed part of the inner constitution of the Old-Testament revelation in reality, so too is the church's word necessary to the inner constitution of the sacrament. No one has so far [052] formulated this idea more successfully than Aquinas, who elaborated one of Augustine's suggestions.[30] Just as God, the *logos* or word—Aquinas reasoned—became incarnate in an outward form, perceptible to us, so too did the 'word of faith' (*verbum fidei*) become incarnate in the ritual actions, through which these actions became sacraments or *verba incarnata* ('incarnate words'). The theological doctrine of the *forma sacramenti* ('the form of the sacrament'), which at first sight seems to say so little and which was moreover also suspect on account of its later connection with Aristotelian hylomorphism, thus contains a profound reality. This is that the *forma* of the sacrament, in other words, what makes the ritual action formally a sacrament, is a 'word of faith', a word that proceeds from God, is accepted in faith by the church, and finally, borne up by the church's faith, becomes incarnate in a rite, with the result that this word becomes the essential core of the sacrament and of its sacramental saving effect.[31] The ministry of the word is consequently not simply presupposed in the ministry of the sacrament, but penetrates to its very heart. Just as the prophetic word in Old-Testament times called forth and brought about the saving event in history, precisely because it was a divine word, although spoken in a human form, so too does the sacramental word, the *forma sacramenti,* cause the saving appearance of Christ's redemptive act in the sacrament. Thanks to the ministry of the word, a ritual act becomes the manifestation in mystery of Christ's heavenly act of salvation. The word itself thus becomes a sacrament, namely in the seven sacraments which are an incarnation of the *verbum fidei*. The word of God *in forma ecclesiae* is not an [053] eighth sacrament, but it makes the seven sacraments sacraments and has, as the word of God, a distinctive meaning and saving power—the power to arouse that obedience in faith which is the condition of the fruitful reception of any sacrament and the very pivot of the christian life.

These basic principles enable us to define more precisely the significance of what is usually called the 'first part of the mass' within the whole celebration of the eucharist. It will be clear from what I have already said that the phrase 'first

[30] *ST* III, q. 60, a. 6; see the following footnote.
[31] An analysis of these thomist ideas will be found in *De sacramentele heilseconomie,* I, 378-80.

part of the mass' is in some respects not altogether unfortunate—it is the mass itself, but does not have the last word in the sacrifice of the mass.

Before considering this question, however, I should like very briefly to emphasise the unity that must exist between the ministry of the word and the personal christian life. I cannot hope to deal exhaustively with the whole question of the ministry of the word in this article, but I feel that it is important to say something about the harmony between the testimony of the word and the christian life, in order that what I have already said in the preceding sections should not be misunderstood.

The sacraments have a saving power which is independent of personal holiness of the one who administers them. In the concrete, however, the holy manner in which the sacrament is administered does contribute considerably to the fruitful reception of the sacrament. Thus the ministry of the word is in a sense a reality which is objective in its effect, but this does not exclude the sense in which personal holiness and intelligence play a very special part in the
[054] ministry of the word, even more than in the sacraments. 'We believe, and so we speak' (2 Cor 4:13). The ministry of the word must be a confession of this faith and it must form a harmonious whole with the preacher's christian life. It is for this purpose that the charismatic gifts of grace are given to each according to his state in life. It is then that Christ is fully present in the word of the church, for he is then present in a special way in this personal surrender in faith to the word. And that personally spoken word then refers, in the whole of its human form, to the action of grace that is present in the holy testimony of a believing person. This presence of Christ in the word is doubly effective. What is more, the sense of Christ's presence in the ministry of the word will prevent the minister of the word himself from making foolish attempts to allow his own understanding—or lack of understanding—to prevail instead of allowing God to speak through the word. This question really requires a separate study. All that I have done here is to draw attention to it.

2. THE SERVICE OF THE WORD IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

Just as every sacrament is introduced, surrounded, and enclosed by the ministry of the word, which awakens in us a grateful obedience in faith to the saving reality that is accomplished in us in the sacrament, so also is the celebration of the eucharist of its very nature a ministry, or service of the word, which is especially prominent in the opening part of the mass known as the 'liturgy of the word'. If we are to understand this fully and at the same time refute the obvious objection that there are, in this part of the mass, not only a

service of the word, but also a confession of faith, a confession of guilt, prayers, and supplications, then we must go more deeply into the New-Testament teaching about the 'word of God'. [055]

Schlier has correctly pointed to the implications of the word of God according to primitive christianity. Because it was given to the church—that is, to the apostolic office of the church—, the gospel, as the word of God spoken by men, acquired many different new shades of meaning. The place of the ministry of the word is, in principle, the assembled people of God, the faithful community which unites for the purpose of worshipping and praising God. The assembled people of God is thus the inward situation in which the word of God resounds. But the form of God's word is influenced by this situation and many different aspects of this one service of the word are thus brought out. The word is addressed to people who, because of their baptism, have already given themselves in faith to Christ and to catechumens who are being strengthened and instructed in their faith. Thus the 'service of the word' automatically also acquires the form of a confession of faith—a confirmation of the word of God that has been accepted through the power of the ministry of the word, or a consolidation of the incipient faith of the catechumens. The same situation—the fact that the word of God resounds in the community of those who already believe and in the community of the catechumens—brings out even more shades of meaning in the word of God. It is not only proclaimed as an apostolic *kerygma* or as an apostolic *didascalia,* admonishing and announcing. It can also be a 'word of prayer', a 'word of hymn' or song of divine praise, a doxology, an acclamation, or a priestly blessing. All these variations—these typically liturgical elements—are so many different forms of the one word of God. They are all to be found especially in the first part of the mass—the scriptural readings[32], the sermon, the supplications, the acclamations, and the confessions of faith and of guilt. Thus both the apostolic office and the faithful, praying church are prominent in the 'service of the word', in instruction and confession of the word which flow naturally into the *Oratio Communis* ('Common Prayer'). Christ is personally present in this part of the mass—on the one hand in the community that prays and confesses its faith and guilt, and on the other in the word of scripture that bears witness and in the church's official preaching. But Christ is present there bearing witness, instructing, and admonishing in order to bring us to the more profound obedience in faith that is necessary if we are to offer *his* sacrifice with him under the visible forms of bread and wine. The 'service of the word', which evokes our response in faith, strengthens it, and gives meaning to it, has to arouse in us a faith in the reality of what is about to [056]

[32] For the importance of this immediate contact with scripture itself, see part 2, chapter 6: 'The Bible and Theology', on pp. [184-214] below.

take place—the reality that is of vital importance to all of us. The first fruit of the celebration of the eucharist is thus given to us already in the first part of the mass: obedience and surrender in faith to Christ's sacrificial act of love—an obedience which flows over into praise, thanksgiving and rejoicing, into confession, and into acceptance of the demands of morality and religion and into supplication. This sacrificial disposition which is aroused by the word is not something extra to the sacrifice of the mass, but something that enters into
[058] the full significance of the sacrifice through the active participation of the faithful.

This is not all. It would be wrong to call the first part of the mass the 'liturgy of the word' *in contrast to* the sacrificial service. The *anaphora,* or preface, with the words of consecration as the central point, is itself a service of the word in the form of the ancient Jewish *b*^{e}*rākhāh,* or blessing. According to St Paul, we 'proclaim the Lord's death' in the celebration of the eucharist (1 Cor 11:26). In the view of many exegetes and liturgical historians, Paul is referring here not only to a proclamation in and through the ritual act itself, but also to an accompanying proclamation of the word of Christ's death and resurrection. The phrase: 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God', means: 'let us bring the '*b*^{e}*rākhāh* to the Lord our God'—that is, praise *and* thank him because he has redeemed us through his death and resurrection. The Jewish *b*^{e}*rākhāh* (in Greek, *eucharistia),* which was at the same time a sacrifice of praise, undoubtedly influenced the structure of the christian eucharist—a praise of God, the *anamnesis* or proclamation of the reason for this praise ('praised be God who has redeemed us from Egypt, who..., who.... etc.') followed by a doxology and, encouraged by what God did in the past, a supplication, asking him not to be slow to respond in the future. This praise of God for the 'signs and wonders' that he has performed in nature and in history for his people, ending with a suppliant 'be mindful, O God' became, in the christian *eucharistia* of the consecrating preface, a praise of God for the miracles accomplished by him especially in the death and resurrection of Christ. The 'Amen' (or 'bravo') of the faithful confirms this 'proclamation of the Lord's death'.

[057] But this proclamation of Christ's death by the *word* cannot be dissociated from the liturgical *action* itself of the eucharist. The word is not simply an interpretation of what takes place in the action. It forms a single liturgical whole with it, with the result that this proclamation even becomes the *forma* of the eucharist.[33] In the celebration of the eucharist, the word makes Christ appear not only in the manner of speaking in testimony and not only even in the

[33] It is not relevant to this study to consider to what extent the whole of the *anaphora* was the *forma* of the eucharist in the course of the history of the church, and to what extent only the words of consecration are now this *forma,* at least in the west.

manner of the sacramental sign, as in the case of the other sacraments, but also in the special manner of the eucharistic presence, by virtue of the dialogue of transubstantiation, through which the 'sacrifice of praise' at the same time becomes an offering of expiation—that is, the sacramental sacrifice of the cross. Thus, taking up one of Schlier's ideas, we may truthfully say that the service of the word is in fact only a 'foreword' to that which is accomplished in the eucharistic sacrifice itself—the word of the proclamation is a foreword to the decisive word of the eucharist. The whole celebration of the eucharist is thus a service of the word, and the whole eucharist is a sacramental event. But it is here—that is, in the very core of the *anaphora*—that the word reveals its supreme saving power and, as it were transcending itself, becomes *compressed*[34] into a personal reality. Christ himself in the form of sacrificial bread and wine. [060] Subject to the word of the covenant—'calix novi testamenti'—the sacrificial forms of bread and wine are the real presence of the sacrificed Christ, the Lord. The spoken word finally gives way here to the pre-eminent word, the person of the living Christ. But, as is the case elsewhere, the proclamation of the word is especially demanded here by the presence of Christ, so that it is possible for us to believe truly in the presence of this unfathomable reality and to experience its awesomeness and its fascination. An Old Testament image that is perhaps unfamiliar to us in the west acquires its full meaning in the eucharist—the 'service of the word' is truly the 'roaring of the lion', announcing a great event that will be a judgement to salvation or to disaster. It is only when the service of the word is taken quite seriously, and we encounter the testifying Christ in it, that we shall be able to encounter and receive him (in the full sense of the word) in his presence in the eucharistic sacrifice, 'until he come'—until we are with him at the resurrection.

It will therefore be clear that the sermon, following the gospel, in no way 'interrupts' the celebration of the eucharist, but forms an integral part of the service of the word, and as such shares in its saving power. In the sermon, the word of God sounds in the manner of the apostolic word of the church. All that I have said about the service of the word applies equally to the sermon in the mass. In this sermon, the word of God is associated in a special way with the concrete people who are taking part here and now in the celebration of the [059] eucharist. The sermon is therefore an extension of the first part of the mass—it belongs to this rather than to the sacrificial part. It is even possible to say that

[34] This word *(verdichten)* is borrowed from Karl Rahner 'When is the *most compressed,* the most effective word spoken? Which is *the* word of the priest, of which all the others are only expositions and variations? It is the word that the priest speaks when, quite absorbed into the person of the *Word* of the Father become flesh, he says softly, "This is my Body... This is the chalice of my Blood", *Schriften zur Theologie,* I, Einsiedeln 1956², 362.

the whole of the first part, dogmatically speaking, grew out of a sermon of the church, with the result that, if the concrete historical development of the liturgy of the mass is disregarded, at least the essential core of the christian *b^{e}rākhāh* (or blessing) on the one hand, and of the church's preaching, to which the faithful give their consent in prayer and in confession, on the other hand, have been preserved. The sermon thus, so to speak, forms an element of the proper of the mass, of its changeable part. The concrete content of the sermon is not, however, laid down in the missal, but is left to the inspiration of the priest, the servant of the word. It is impossible for the word of the sermon to be laid down because it is directly concerned with the actual day-to-day life, in the christian sense, of christian people. We might speak, then, not only of the *commune* (the 'common) of the mass and of its *proprium* (the 'proper'), but also of its *propriissimum*—that is, the sermon, which is the most individuated, most special part. The whole is a service of the word, culminating in the *forma* of the eucharist. We may therefore say that the sermon ends in what makes the eucharistic celebration the eucharist—the *forma* of the whole liturgical event, the 'word of God'. We have already seen that the event itself was called a 'word of God' in the Old Testament, insofar as this event formed the essential content of the dialogue between God and man. As the content of such a personal relationship of dialogue with God, the eucharist is a *mysterion* which requires an initiation or, to use a patristic phrase, a 'mystagogical catechesis'. This does not
[061] mean that the sermon always has to be a sermon about the eucharist, or that it must be directly related to the proper or the common of the mass. The good news, in whatever form it is proclaimed, always leads us to Christ's redemption, of which the eucharist celebrates the memory.

To conclude, then, Gusdorf called the word 'un engagement de la personne parmi les choses et les personnes'.[35] This is pre-eminently the case with the word of God, which 'came over to our side' in Christ and entered our human world of things and persons. Christ gave an ultimate meaning to things and to people by his word. He fully expressed himself in the world of things and people to the Father, so that we might listen to this word. It sometimes happens that the partners in a dialogue become different people after a conversation —they are enriched, having discovered a new world, and even the things around them are changed. In dialogue, the word has a truly 'creative' function. But such a human word is only a pale reflection of the divine word addressed to us in the man Jesus. This divine word inwardly seizes hold of us in our innermost being and inwardly changes the things that surround us. Because of this divine dialogue, the bread is no longer purely human bread, but Christ's

[35] *La Parole,* 32. 'A commitment of the person to and among things and other persons.'

body in the sacrificial form of bread. Thus we may see that the whole of the life of grace—concrete human life itself—is nothing but a relationship in dialogue with the living God within the communion of the 'saints'. The whole of our human and christian condition can be understood in the light of the prologue to St John's gospel:

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,... And the Word became flesh. [Jn 1:1, 14.]

This is the eucharistic word—it is always the same word of God, that forms the 'object' of a dialogue which begins with God himself, and in which we are invited to participate so that we may finally share in the divine life that is expressed in the 'word' so that it can communicate itself to us and become reality in us. [062]

Chapter 4

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE APOSTOLIC FAITH INTO THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

There are two distinct phases in the tradition of faith. The first is the *constitutive* phase, which includes the whole of the reality of revelation and which closed with the end of the early apostolic church, that is, with the death of the last apostle, as the last authentic witness of the mystery of Christ.[1] The second is the *interpretative* phase, during which nothing new has been added to the content of faith, but its hidden wealth has been more sharply defined since the closing of revelation with the death of the last apostle.

Although the closing of revelation is not a dogma that has been solemnly defined, it has been universally accepted by the normal teaching authority of the church. This teaching is also closely connected with the doctrine about the [064] unchangeable nature of dogma. This closed and unchangeable nature of revelation must be respected throughout the interpretative phase, which includes the growth of dogma in the whole course of the church's history up to the *parousia.* This development, within fixed limits or in the tradition of the original content of revelation, is not only a historical fact, but also an authentic doctrine of the church.[2]

These two facts confront us with the problem of the essence of the bond between closed revelation and the later stages in the development of the faith. The question is: how can a recent definition of a dogma be implied in a revelation closed twenty centuries before? How can we speak of there being a

[1] See the decree *Lamentabili,* esp. DS 3421 (= DR 2021). See also DS 3020, 3459 (= DR 1800, 2059), and DR 2080 (omitted in DS). (For the convenience of readers, references to H. Denzinger's *Enchiridion Symbolorum* are throughout given according to both systems of numeration. 'DR' refers to Karl Rahner's 1953 edition, as representative of editions published between 1908 and 1957; and 'DS' refers to Adolf Schönmetzer's 1962 edition, which was the first to employ the new numeration system. Further bibliographical details are given in the list of abbreviations on pp. xiif. above—Tr.).
[2] See DS 3020 (=DR 1800); and *Pascendi,* esp. DS 3483 (= DR 2079) and DR 2080 (omitted in DS).

new pronouncement *for us* in revelation without in effect appealing to a new revelation? In other words, how can the development or gradual maturing of tradition (which is to be found not only in the faith of a particular part of the church, but in that of the whole church) be reconciled with the church's doctrine of the closed nature of revelation and the unchangeable character of dogma?

1. A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE PROBLEM

1. In the fathers and the Middle Ages

In its present scope, this problem is of very recent date. It is, in fact, scarcely a century old. The unchangeable nature of dogma and the need to keep to the *paradosis,* that is, to what was handed down, was stressed by the fathers. More
[065] attention was given, from the third and fourth centuries onwards, to the development of christian doctrine, as the result of the necessity to combat heresies. Vincent of Lérins wrote a treatise in which he set out the principles of a continuous development. In the patristic period, it was basically only a question of expressing in a more explicit form what had previously been less adequately formulated.

The theologians of the Middle Ages did not consider the development of dogma as a dynamic process, but they did study the various phases within objective revelation and before its closing as a static situation.[3] Their basic thesis was that faith was substantially the same at all times, both before and after Christ. Because of the inward, objective, and organic structure of the truths of faith, belief in one article of faith implied, by way of a necessary, assumed, or consequential connection, belief in all the truths of faith. The minimally explicit content of faith embraced the existence of the 'God of salvation', in which the whole content of revelation was implied. This was a consequence of the supernatural character of faith as the 'beginning of eternal life'. The objective revelations up to the death of the last apostle were only an explicitation of what had already been implied in the faith of the first human beings. A second kind of explicitation came into operation after the explicitation of revelation itself had been closed. This later process aimed only to formulate more explicitly what had previously already been formulated 'sufficiently explicitly' by the apostles.[4] The problem was limited to a consideration of the relationship between the different creeds, and the actual development of dogma was only
[066] indirectly touched on to a limited extent. The competence to formulate more

[3] See, for example, Aquinas, *ST,* II-II, q. 1, art 7 to 9.
[4] Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 10, ad 1.

explicit confessions of faith was reserved for the teaching office of the church[5], but theology fulfilled a fundamental, subservient function here.[6]

Basing their view on patristic texts[7], the medieval theologians were of the opinion that the apostles had a more complete knowledge of the content of revelation than later christians. This doctrine has remained influential in theology until the present time, but the necessary distinction between the assertion that the apostles had a very profound awareness of the essence of christianity and the assertion that they also had a more explicit intellectual knowledge of all christian dogmas is often not made. If this distinction is not made, it is difficult to reconcile this doctrine with the fact of the development of dogma. The church fathers, on whom these theologians based their view, meant in the first place that revelation ended with the apostles and that attempts to add new elements to the apostolic tradition were heretical.

2. In the later scholastics

No further progress was made with this problem in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It is at present widely believed in scholastic circles that theologians placed a dogmatic value on the theological conclusion in these two centuries—in other words, that theological reasoning would guarantee the evolving continuity of dogma. This interpretation is, however, unhistorical. Even in Aquinas *fides* (faith, or belief) had a wider meaning than purely [067] dogmatic faith.[8] All the truths which, if they were denied, would threaten dogmatic faith proper were included among 'faith'. The medieval view was, then, that whoever believed the *prima credibilia,* the central truths or articles of faith, was consequently bound to 'accept' all the truths connected with these central truths. The question as to whether these other truths were accepted with or without supernatural faith was, however, not asked at this time. It was purely a matter of a consistent moral attitude.

This problem remained unchanged for several centuries after Aquinas. The only difference was that not only the articles of faith, but also those truths which were not articles, became 'theological principles'. This resulted in the distinction (not made by Aquinas) being made between what was 'formally revealed' and what was 'virtually revealed', which included the 'conclusions of faith'. Whether these conclusions were also revealed remained outside the theological problem of this time. Every true theological conclusion was called a

[5] Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 10.
[6] 'Per studium sanctorum': Aquinas, *3 Sent.* d. 25, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 1, ad 5.
[7] Especially Gregory the Great, *In Ezech.* lib. II, Hom. 4, §12. (PL 76, 980); see Aquinas *3 Sent.* d. 25, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 3.
[8] See part 2, chapter 5: 'What is Theology?' on pp. [95-183] below.

creditum ('a thing believed'), not in the theological sense, but in a noetic sense. In other words, the theological conclusion did not have the scientific value of a *scitum* ('a thing known'), but was of a lower noetic order. It was not evident; it was *non scitum, sed mere creditum* ('not known, but rather believed'), that is to say, it came under *fides,* halfway between the aristotelian *epistēmē* (knowledge) and *doxē* (opinion). Supernatural faith was left completely out of account.[9]
[068] Whether a theological conclusion was revealed or was not revealed was therefore an unknown problem in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Gradually, however, attempts were made to classify the various 'catholic truths' more accurately. It was in the sixteenth century that this tendency first resulted in the question being asked as to whether the theological conclusion had a dogmatic value. Melchior Cano still denied that these conclusions could become dogma, but maintained that the church could confirm them as truths, though not as truths of faith.[10] Vazquez was one of the first to teach that the theological conclusion had to be accepted with divine faith by those who accepted the syllogistic method of reasoning, and, after being defined by the church, by all christians.[11] Molina rejected such rationalism.[12] Suarez sought a compromise, and maintained that what had been formally revealed could be either explicit or implicit, and that the implicit conclusion could, by discursive reasoning, be deduced from the explicit. Such conclusions had, in Suarez' view, dogmatic value. It was only what had been virtually revealed that could not have a dogmatic value.[13] John a Sancto Thoma, using different terms, put forward very much the same teaching as Suarez, but emphasised that the definable truth was not really a conclusion, but was only presented in the form of a conclusion.[14] The Salamanca school formulated the theory that became
[069] classic in the scholastic period, namely that if a theological conclusion was reached by strict deductive inference *(illatio),* it could not be the object of divine faith. If, however, the conclusion was based on two premisses of faith, it had to be accepted in faith, not as a conclusion, but in itself.

This entire scholastic controversy, however, was not really concerned with the problem of the development of dogma. The problem is rather: how can we explain the fact that we can give our assent in faith to truths which we establish by means of theological reasoning? This doctrine implies the view that the more

[9] See A. Lang, 'Die conclusio theologica in der Problemstellung der Spätscholastik', *DTF* 22 (1944), 270-1; E. Krebs, *Theologie und Wissenschaft nach der Lehre der Hochscholastik.* Munster i. W. 1912, 8*.
[10] See A. Lang, 'Das Problem der theologischen Konklusionen bei M. Cano und D. Banez', *DTF* 21 (1943), 87-9.
[11] G. Vazquez, *In I Partem,* q. 1, a. 2, disp. 5, cap. 3.
[12] L. de Molina, *Comm. in I Partem,* q. 1, a. 2, disp. 1.
[13] P. Suarez, *De fide,* Disp. III, sect. 11.
[14] Joh. a Sancto Thoma, *In I Partem,* q. 1, disp. 2, a. 4.

recent definitions of faith were *logically* contained in the earlier stages of the development of the faith. When the problem of the development of dogma was really stated later on, in our own time, mainly as a defence against modernism, an appeal was made by the modern scholastics to the doctrine outlined above in an attempt to find a solution. This 'logical type', which I shall consider later on, can therefore not be regarded as a traditional thesis. It is rather the scholastic thesis of the dogmatic value of certain theological conclusions seen in a new perspective that was quite alien to the earlier problem. It is only with this formal reservation in mind that I can accept the appeal made by the modern scholastics to the earlier scholastic teaching.

3. In the modern period

The various solutions to this question that have been provided in the modern period, since the problem of the development of dogma has in fact been stated, can be broadly divided into three types—the historical, the logical, and the theological type. [070]

1. *The historical type.* Some theologians believe that it can be established from historical research that there has been, throughout the centuries, a fundamental and unchangeable identity between the various phases in the church's awareness of the truths of faith. They claim, for example, that it should be possible to show, from historical documents, that Mary's assumption into heaven was, in one way or another, confessed in apostolic times.

This thesis is, however, contradicted by historical research itself, which—because of the lack of evidence—does not, in many cases, allow us to establish with any certainty, on purely historical grounds, the continuity of any datum of faith. This is of necessity implied in the historical method itself, which can only reconstruct explicit thought in all its historical situations, while a great deal of human thought takes place implicitly. Historical research can, in many cases, show that there was no contradiction between earlier and later stages of faith, and even point to some connections, but it can do no more than this.[15]

2. *The logical type.* As I have already observed, present-day thomists make use of the scholastic views about the dogmatic value of theological conclusions in order to elucidate the problem of the development of dogma. They claim that it is possible, by means of discursive reasoning and logical analysis, to lay bare the implicit and virtual richness of the truths of faith that have long been recognised as explicit, and thereby to deduce the more recent explicit definitions of dogma. The dogmas that have been defined more recently are

[15] See also H. D. Simonin, ' "Implicite" et "explicite" dans le développement du dogme', *Aug.* 14 (1937), 126-45.

[071] thus regarded as logically equivalent to the primitive christian data of revelation that were not in those days precisely defined. Theological reasoning is thus the principle both of the unchangeable character of dogma and of its development. Conceptually there is an advance, since the implications of the primitive truths of faith, which were not explicitly recognised at the time, are deduced from these early truths. On the other hand, however, there is also an objective, factual identity between the theological conclusion and the premisses of faith.

Three different tendencies can be distinguished in the logical type. According to R. Schultes[16], a logical connection can only be the norm of a true development of dogma if it is not a strictly deductive connection: that is, if there is no *illatio* (strictly deductive inference), but rather a *syllogismus explicativus* (a syllogism in which the conclusion in effect 'draws out' a proposition already 'contained' in the major premiss). It is therefore only when the conclusion is a clearer, but essentially equivalent, expression of the same datum of faith that a process of theological reasoning can be the criterion for a true development of dogma. M. Martin-Sola[17], however, went much further. He maintained that the norm of a true development of dogma is that the theological conclusion is reached by reasoning according to which there is both a conceptual advance and a factual identity between the conclusion and the premisses. The theological reasoning is thus, according to Martin-Sola, the sign and the guarantee of the continuity of the various stages of faith. But it is only after a
[072] conclusion of this kind, which as such comes within the category of virtual revelation, has been defined by the church that it can be accepted as contained in formal revelation. In itself, the conclusion is directly revealed. *Quoad nos* (in respect of us), however, it is only indirectly revealed. The church's definition, however, changes the indirect *quoad nos* into a direct *quoad nos,* by virtue of the fact that the truth is in itself directly revealed even though it was only discovered by means of reasoning. Because of the factual identity of the concepts, despite their distinction, Martin-Sola calls this development homogeneous: that is to say, we do not, with the conclusion, step outside the original datum of revelation that served as the premiss of the reasoning.

The most extreme thesis was, however, advocated by M. Tuyaerts.[18] In his view, every true theological conclusion has, even before it is defined by the church, to be accepted with divine faith, because God in his revelatory activity not only knew all that revelation included virtually, but also knew in advance all that we can and must conclude from this, with the result that he himself

[16] See especially his *Introductio in historiam dogmatum*, Paris, 1922.
[17] *L'évolution homogène du dogme catholique*, two parts, Fribourg, 1924.
[18] *L'évolution du dogme*, Louvain, 1919.

vouches for these conclusions as such by his authority as revealer. The limits of theological reasoning are therefore also the limits of the development of dogma. In other words, it is only theological speculation which causes dogma to evolve.

The logical type was at one time greatly favoured, but there is less support for it now, mainly because of its thesis that theological reasoning provides the *only* explanation for the development of dogma. Those modern authors who accept the dogmatic value of theological conclusions[19] in no way intend to define the nature of the development of dogma. Van der Putte is opposed to [073] any attempt to identify the problem of the development of dogma with the theological conclusion.[20] In this, he is completely at variance with the logical type proper, and he explicitly affirms that those definitions of dogma that can be historically established do not come anywhere near to showing the character of a speculative development. On the other hand, he claims that 'all perceptible development and growth must be able to show a logical connection with the previously-given doctrine'[21], with the result that the 'homogeneity of the development of dogma demands that every justified theological conclusion should be credible both objectively and subjectively'.[22] To prove this, van der Putte uses the same argument as M. Tuyaerts.

Against the theory of the logical development of dogma, it is possible to put forward the following argument. On the one hand, relatively strict logical connections between the various stages of faith must be accepted, and in establishing these connections christian reasoning plays an *instrumental* part within the greater complex of the development of tradition. On the other hand, it is not possible to regard logical connections as the principle of a development of a supernatural faith. A development of faith can only have a strictly supernatural principle, whereas consent to the conclusion of a theological argument, in whatever way it is presented, is not entirely dependent on the light of revelation, but also on human reason. Theological reasoning as such can [074] therefore be the principle of a *theological* development, but not the principle of a *dogmatic* development.

There is, however, an even more radical objection to the logical type. Its exponents tend to confuse the psychological and the logical aspects of reasoning. They identify the structure of the logical connections in a syllogism with discursive thought as a factual, *psychological* activity, and regard the

[19] See, for example, J. C. M. van der Putte: *De dogmatische waarde van de theologische redenering,* Nijmegen, 1948; and 'Dogma-ontwikkeling en theologische redenering', *Jaarboek 1950 Werkgen. Kath. Theol. Nederl,* Hilversum, 1950, 163-80.
[20] Dogma-ontwikkeling', 163-4.
[21] *De dogmatische waarde*, 227.
[22] *De dogmatische waarde*, 252.

definition of the logical structure of this as the definition of the discursive reasoning itself. Newman pointed this out when he made a distinction between 'implicit' and 'explicit' reasoning. From the psychological point of view, discursive thought is merely the totality of experiential knowledge—in other words, it is continuously growing experience controlled, not by subjective factors, but by the objective itself that becomes more and more completely contained in explicit knowledge. Thus discursive reasoning is a gradually increasing appropriation and taking possession of something that was already previously present in the total consciousness, but not yet fully an explicit possession. The syllogism is therefore only meaningful when it is used as an element of experiential knowledge, since the concept can only grasp reality as an element of experience. Logical thought only controls the explicit aspect of human thought. In expressly conceptual thought, which assumes experiential knowledge, it is the noetic structure of experience that is revealed and critically tested. In explicit reasoning, the original datum is seen in the light of the implications that are discovered by experiential knowledge and reflective analysis. These implications then show themselves as *consequences* or *conclusions,* but they were present from the very beginning in the consciousness,
[075] although unnoticed. Development is, then, always a transition from implicit to explicit consciousness. Seen in this light, the function of the connection within the mystery of faith is firmly established and at the same time more soundly situated in a psychological whole that includes strictly supernatural elements.

3. *The theological type.* Defined negatively, this modern tendency explicitly or implicitly denies the two preceding theories. Those who support the theological type therefore emphasise that revelation is not simply a number of truths, but one complex saving reality, of which the intellectual is merely one aspect. The doctrinal development is simply the intellectual aspect of a much larger developing whole. This modern trend of thought stresses the religious contact with the reality of revelation itself as the breeding-ground for the growth of the revelation-in-word, either by postulating a preliminary implicit stage of knowledge of the faith (J. H. Newman, the Tübingen school, M. Blondel, de la Barre, H. de Lubac, etc.), or by disregarding such a comprehensive implicit awareness, or at least by defining it less precisely (L. Charlier, N. Sanders, etc.). All these authors regard the final pronouncement of the church's teaching office as the ultimate criterion for the development of dogma (especially R. Draguet).

After the Tubingen school (especially Drey and Moehler), and also independent of it, as is now generally accepted, it was above all Newman[23] who formulated and attempted to solve the problem. It is, however, a remarkable [076] fact that, although Newman is frequently quoted by modern authors, the recent attempts to solve the problem of the development of dogma are not supported by a sufficient knowledge of Newman's ideas. This is due to the fact that Newman did not expound his views systematically, but expressed them in various different fragments and sermons, with the result that they can only be properly grasped if his ideas are studied at greater depth. Since the appearance of J. H. Walgrave's masterly synthesis[24], however, we can no longer plead ignorance. Because of the importance of Newman's ideas on the development of dogma, I propose, with the help of Walgrave's study, to summarise these views here. The appearance of Christ aroused in the apostles' consciousness of faith a comprehensive intuition of the essence of christianity. There are, in addition to explicit aspects, also implicit orientations and unexpressed elements in this initial 'impression' or 'idea', which constitute a knowledge that is experienced rather than consciously thought out.[25] According to Newman, the comprehensive intuition of the apostles was handed down by and in the church. Once an idea is alive within a group, it creates an atmosphere in which the christian idea is transferred to and impressed upon the new members of the group. The 'impression' or idea is the link between unsystematised revelation and systematic theology with the definitions of dogma. The whole of the development of dogma begins with a comprehensive intuition which is in [077] many respects implicit and continues, through implicit and explicit thought, to the point where the dogma is explicitly formulated. The initial truths of faith that have not yet been consciously reflected on, are, according to the psychological and sociological laws of growth of the human mind, driven forward under the impulse of the Holy Spirit and, in the course of time, projected more and more sharply on to the explicit consciousness of the church.

According to Newman, thought has an important part to play in this development. The guiding principle of this development, which has its basis in a human nature that is by definition evolutionary, is to be found in human reason. In this context, Newman called 'reason' or 'reasoning' the real principle of development, and by this he meant reasoning in the widest sense of the

[23] J. H. Newman, *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine,* London, 1845; *Fifteen Sermons,* London, 1898. See also the correspondence between Newman and Perrone, *Greg* 16 (1935), 403-44.
[24] J. H. Walgrave, *Kardinaal Newman's theorie over de ontwikkeling van het dogma*, Antwerp, 1944; and *Newman the Theologian*, London, 1960.
[25] 'The absence, or partial absence, or incompleteness of dogmatic statements is no proof of the absence of impressions or implicit judgements in the mind of the church' (Sermon xv, *Fifteen Sermons*, 323).

word. He distinguished between two aspects of reasoning in this sense. (1) *Implicit reasoning* is, according to Newman, spontaneous, non-technical, non-reflective, and unconscious experience as an aspect of the whole of the personal christian life. This form of reasoning is a slow maturing which is subject to many different influences and whose results are personal and cannot be communicated. (2) *Explicit reasoning,* on the other hand, is either purposeful, or reflective, technical, and logical thought. In explicit reasoning, implicit reasoning is re-thought in a logical form. It is, in other words, a later logical arrangement of the growth of experiential knowledge. The syllogism, therefore, does not give us a new truth, but exposes the logical structure of the process of development along which we have already come, in our spontaneous experience, to this truth. Although it does not measure up to the wealth of implicit thought, this logical interpretation is nonetheless a homogeneous
[078] extension of the implicit preliminary stage. The fact that living experiential knowledge and reflective thought are not proportionate to each other means that a certain latitude is left for what Newman called 'the illative sense'. In view of the fact that logical, reflective thought is an inadequate expression of experiential knowledge, a theological syllogism—according to Newman—can give only probability. The illative sense which, in matters of faith, is a gift of God at least in its origin, is a synthetic function of the judgement by means of which we, through intimate contact with and affective experience of the reality of faith, obtain a selective sense of judgement, so that we can, despite non-apodeictic reasoning, come to the right conclusions.

But, in this world, which always threatens to level down dogma, dogma would not be safe unless God's providence supported it infallibly. This, for Newman, formed the basis of the inner need for a visible church with infallible teaching authority. According to Newman, then, neither logical thought nor history could be the ultimate criterion for the development of dogma. Nor indeed could the illative sense of the faithful and of the theologians of the church be the ultimate criterion, since this sense is strictly personal and cannot be communicated. Only the church's authority to teach was therefore, according to Newman, the ultimate principle of the continuous development of dogma.

Even before Newman, similar views were expressed by the Tübingen school (Moehler and Drey) and by Scheeben, and after Newman by the Jesuit De la Barre.[26] M. Blondel also put forward a similar view[27], but, in making a
[079] distinction between the comprehensive implicit christian experience (the 'implicite vécu'), and what is explicitly known (the resulting 'explicite connu'),

[26] A. de la Barre, *La vie du dogme catholique,* Paris, 1898.
[27] M. Blondel, 'Histoire et dogme', *Quinz.* 56 (1904), 145-67, 349-73, and 433-58.

appealed to the christian life itself as the source of a deeper knowledge of the truth. According to Blondel, dogma in practice—christian life and activity—gives us an 'intuition' of the whole reality of faith. This intuition in turn enables us, in new situations, to 'sense', by spontaneous, sympathetic reaction, where the truth of faith is situated and where it is not. H. de Lubac also maintained that, when revelation was closed, everything had already been given to, and was present in, the christian consciousness.[28]

Charlier[29] insisted on the fact that the church herself is the reality of revelation and that the development in knowledge of the faith is only the complement of the development of the church herself. The laws of growth of this development are, in Charlier's view, concealed in God, but, since factors of human development must be taken into account in connection with these supernatural laws, we can, by means of these human factors, gain some insight into the laws governing the definition of dogma. Only the church's teaching office can, however, establish the identity between an earlier stage of faith and its present position. N. Sanders[30] also made a similar distinction, but stressed the revelation-in-word as the real revelation of the reality of salvation. By virtue of the life itself of the church as the reality of salvation, there is, according to Sanders, a transition from implicit to explicit in our knowledge of the [080] revelation-in-word.

According to Draguet[31], a development can be recognised as authentic only by the fact that the church's teaching office declares it infallibly to be a dogma. On the other hand, in common with the logical and the historical type of theory, he concedes that this theological principle of the church's magisterium only has a supplementary function, especially in those cases where the logical and the historical arguments do not produce a satisfactory result. He explains the fact that revelation has been closed by saying that at least 'all the principles of christianity' were established from the very beginning.[32] He does not, however, admit to an implicit, but real, awareness concerning all the data of revelation at the close of revelation.

It will be clear from this historical outline that both the unchangeable nature and the development of dogma must take place within the christian consciousness of faith. Revelation *quoad se*—that is revelation which is unrelated to the church's awareness of faith—is not really revelation. All the

[28] H. de Lubac, 'Le problème du développement du dogme', *RSR* 35 (1938), 130-60 (esp. 157f.).
[29] L. Charlier, *Essai sur le problème théologique*, Thuilles 1938.
[30] N. Sanders, 'Openbaring, traditie, dogma-ontwikkeling', *SC* 15 (1939), 1-12 and 111-29.
[31] R. Draguet, 'L'évolution des dogmes', in M. Brillant and M. M. Nédoncelle, *Apologétique,* Paris 1948[2], 1097-1122.
[32] 'L'évolution des dogmes', 1108.

data of revelation must be given *quoad nos*—given, that is, with respect to us—at the close of revelation.

If we consider the most valuable elements in all these attempts to solve the problem together with the medieval, and especially the thomist, doctrine of the 'light of faith', we should at least be able to obtain a clear perspective within which a more fully worked out solution should be situated. The elaboration of this solution will of necessity be personal in character, since there is no
[081] traditional view here. The problem of the development of tradition, in all its dimensions, is essentially a modern one.

2. PERSPECTIVES FOR A SYNTHESIS

On the assumption that there is, because of the transcendence of grace, a real discontinuity between the natural and the supernatural, we may affirm that the supernatural is of significance for the natural, and indeed that this significance has its point of contact in the natural. At the same time, since there is only one divine providence, the natural consequently gains its ultimate significance from the supernatural. The entire structure of the natural development of man, both individually and socially, is therefore bound to *serve* the development of grace and consequently also that of dogma. The whole of man's active equipment—active, that is, in the mental and spiritual growth of man—will have its function in the human life that has entered the reality of revelation. At the same time, however, transcendental dimensions must also be taken into account. The natural factors, which also influence the development of dogma, therefore merge again and again into mystery, and are thereby adjusted or definitively defined. The spontaneous christian experience of life, both individual and collective, 'implicit' christian thought, and explicit analysis and synthesis thus play an indispensable part in the development of dogma, a function which can, however, only determine a development of *faith* when it is subject to the guidance of strictly supernatural principles.

1. The function of the light of faith

[082] It is important to stress that revelation is not only revelation-in-word, but also revelation-in-reality, a *mystērion.* It is, in other words, a historical event in which God himself accomplishes a deeper saving mystery—that is, the appearance of Christ 'in the flesh', in a visible earthly form. The Old Testament prepared for this event, and the visible, sacramental church brings it to us. Christ himself, both in his actions and in his words, is revelation. 'Etiam factum Verbi verbum

nobis est'[33]—the acts of the word speak to us and, on the other hand, the revelation-in-word is only one aspect of the total appearance of the mystery of Christ. It is therefore preferable to speak of the development of tradition rather than of the development of dogma. What has been handed down to us, for example, in connection with the eucharist is not simply the *doctrine* of the eucharist, but also—and above all—the reality itself of the celebration of the eucharist, the meaning and content of which are expressed in conceptual terms in the doctrine. The tradition itself is both kerygmatic and sacramental.

The reality and the doctrine of revelation, which continues to live in the church, cannot be recognised or assimilated as a *mystērion*—that is, as a visible appearance of divine realities of immediate concern to us— unless God himself inwardly prompts us to accept them in faith. *Vidit et credidit,* 'he saw *and* believed'; in other words, we do not come into contact with the act of revelation and its supernatural saving content in the revelation-in-word and revelation-in-reality unless God addresses us inwardly. Aquinas called this inward divine impulse towards faith the 'lumen fidei', the 'light of faith' or 'inner illumination', which is an 'inner *instinctus* of God [i.e, an instinct implanted by God] which prompts us to believe'.[34] It is through this inward [083] attraction proceeding from God that the subject who encounters the church in the course of his life is inwardly adapted to the supernatural dimension of the mystery of revelation. In other words, this light of faith enables me to grasp more in the mystery of revelation than is said about it in conceptual terms and than history tells us about it. The material objects of faith enter our conscious minds by way of the church's proclamation of the word (*fides ex auditu,* or 'faith by learning and listening') and the historical saving fact of the living church herself. We do not, however, come into contact with the formal object of faith in this way, but in a purely supernatural way, 'through the inner impulse of the grace of faith' or light of faith. The affective contact in which we know God is in us the result of the *locutio interna* ('inner address') or of the light of faith. Its meaning and content, however, come from objective, public revelation. This meaning is not explicitly known from the very outset, but is preceded by an implicit stage, which may be called—in Newman's terminology—the sphere of implicit 'impressions'. Both the explicit stage and the preliminary, implicit stage thus provide the content, the *determinatio* of the light of faith.[35] It is by the light of faith that we recognise this content as revealed by God. This inner

[33] Augustine, *Tract, in Joa.* XXIV, 2 *(PL* 35, 1593).
[34] *ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 9, ad 3. This idea is expressed even more clearly in *EJ* c. 6, lect. 5; *Quodl.* II, q. 4, a. 1, ad 1; *3 Sent.,* d. 23, q. 2, a. 1, ad 4.
[35] Aquinas, *4 Sent.,* d. 4, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 3, ad 1: 'Fides principaliter est ex infusione..., sed quantum ad determinationem suam est ex auditu' ('Faith is in principle by infusion..., but in respect of its content it is by hearing and listening').

illumination is not a new revelation, but an inward impulse through the grace
[084] of faith whereby we are able, in a supernatural way, to judge whether we are or are not confronted with a datum of faith—*credibile et credendum* (something at once capable of and requiring belief).[36] The light of faith is the confused inner sense, 'lost' as it were in the consciousness, that tells us what we should believe and what we should not. The explicitation of all that the grace of faith prompts us to believe was made by God himself, through the whole constitutive phase of revelation up to the point where revelation was closed. The explicitation within the sphere of the *determinatio fidei*—that is, the transition from the preliminary, implicit stage to the stage of explicit knowledge— is, however, the real sphere of the development of dogma.

This basic, inner structure of the act and the life of faith is therefore of its very nature also the principle of the continuity of the development of faith, since the inward impulse of the light of faith or grace of faith is only effective in the context of the real meaning and content of revelation. Faith is an act which is essentially and intrinsically directed towards the reality of salvation. Essentially the act and the content of faith correspond to each other. The content of faith is not infused into our minds by way of 'illumination'. There is, therefore, no 'anticipation' of the act of faith with regard to its content. The light of faith is infallible in its operation.[37]

Since the data of faith are present in the living community of the church, these data will naturally be received by a mind that is subject to psychological and sociological growth. The light of faith will therefore, of its own nature, not
[085] be the principle of *development,* but the principle of the continuity and the unchangeable character of this development of faith—the principle which, in a supernatural way, establishes the connection between the different phases of a datum of revelation. The light of faith thus furnishes us with a formal supernatural principle that, without recourse to a new revelation, guarantees that a developed truth has been revealed by God. Since, according to Thomas, the light of faith is an 'inner instinct (or impulse) of the Holy Spirit', and thus an effect of the Holy Spirit, we are bound to conclude that it is the guidance of the Holy Spirit in and through the light of faith which is the principle of the continuity of the development of dogma. This view coincides with the general feeling of the fathers of the Council of Trent, who had intended, in a later session, to define the part played by the church and the Holy Spirit in the sphere of dogma. Circumstances however, prevented the council from issuing a decree. But the *Acta* of the council give us a good idea of the general feeling among the council fathers:

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[36]Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 3, ad 2; q. 1, a. 4, ad 3; and q. 1, a. 5, ad 1.
[37]Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 3.

> Since the Son of God was not to remain always physically among us, he sent the Holy Spirit, who is to reveal the mysteries of God in the hearts of the faithful and daily, until the end of time, instruct the church in all truth and settle all doubts that may arise in the minds of men.[38]

This opinion has a sound and firm foundation in the teaching of the light of faith.

2. The light of faith in the community of faith and the church's teaching office as the highest judge

This does not, however, entirely solve the problem, since, although the reaction [086]
of the light of faith is infallibly accurate, it is in fact possible that an individual may err and, because the impulse of the grace of faith is essentially confused in its operation, may erroneously affirm something as a revealed truth.

> It is indeed possible for a believer to hold something, as a result of human considerations, erroneously as a truth of faith, but it is impossible for this to happen by virtue of the light of faith.[39]

We can, therefore, never know with absolute certainty whether an individual reaction is the result of the light of faith or not. The intermixture of factors that are influenced by human judgement and the pure impulse of the light of faith means that factual certainty is quite impossible, except insofar as questions about the 'necessity of salvation' are concerned.[40] This does not mean that the light of faith ceases to function properly when confronted with the less central truths of faith. What it does mean, however, is that this modest function, which operates in a non-reflective way, is, so to speak, lost in the concrete human psychology, within which many different forms of resistance, prejudices, social influences, and so on can give a new interpretation to and even neutralise the pure effects of the light of faith. Human psychology and the process of human development, which are subject to so many different contacts with the reality of revelation and with its incarnation in this world, provide the affective judgement of the light of faith with the material to which this reacts *per modum inclinationis* (*gratiae fidei*) ('according to the measure of its inclination to the grace of faith'). But it is always possible for this attraction of faith to be overwhelmed or to be diverted from its course by dynamic human tendencies [087]
or possible philosophical prejudices and, as it were, thrust into depths of the human mind. This is why theologians, for instance, may show initial resistance

[38] *Conc. Trid.*, Goerres edn., v, 11.
[39] Aquinas, ST II-II *q.* 1, a. 3, ad 3.
[40] Aquinas, *3 Sent.*, d. 25, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 4, ad 3.

to popular devotion when this anticipates their enquiries and boldly accepts a datum of faith. The light of faith does, in other words, continue to fulfil its function faithfully, but it is possible for centuries to pass before its voice is heard in purity. The light of faith is confused with all the various implicit and explicit factors of the human mind, the influence that these have on each other, and their affective emphases and reticences. This is the explanation of the gradual nature, the ups and downs and the tentative and hesitant progress, of the development of dogma. Nonetheless, it is along this capricious path that the inward *illustratio fidei* ('illumination of faith') makes its affective judgement heard more and more safely and clearly.

It will therefore be evident that the *individual* light of faith cannot function as the principle of the continuity of the development of the church's dogma. In holding this, we should be guilty of Pallavicini's error —his view of the *discerniculum experimentale*—was correctly condemned by the church.

This analysis refers us to the faith of the church as a believing community. Although it is in the first place deeply influenced by strongly religious personalities, the growth of the church's faith is still a communal work. The development, according to which dogma grows from an implicit preliminary phase to the explicit stage is a very slow process of maturation in the bosom of the church, within which all kinds of influences throw light on each other—within which opinions, conjectures and theological conclusions are offered to the community and exposed to the reaction of its other members.
[088] This is a constant process of friction and purification, in which all members of the church community play a part Their activity is apparent at the level, for example, of popular devotion, of sacramental practice, and of various social and liturgical movements within the church. Certain members of the church—for example, the eastern christians—tend automatically to emphasise different aspects from those stressed by others—for example, western christians. Open to everything that is happening here and elsewhere in the church, theologians naturally speculate about recently introduced 'living' material and study the ancient theological sources in the light of the new problems that are raised. The light of faith is 'working' in all this activity. At first, its operation is tentative and 'unconscious'. Gradually, however, in and through the implicit and explicit process of development, the light of faith makes itself more and more strongly felt, until all the various voices eventually converge and the firm conviction grows in the bosom of the church that a definite statement is indeed the explicitation of something that has for a long time been *experienced* in the church and that has been governed by the norm of, or has derived its meaning from the word of God's revelation in Christ.

The *inclinatio fidei* ('inclination to faith') as the *sigillatio primae Veritatis in mente humana* ('the imagining of divine Truth in the human mind'), can come

into operation more purely because the counteracting factors in the slow process of fermentation are gradually eliminated, while at the same time the most suitable theological argument is found after a long process of theological reflection. The new pronouncement is then like a fortunate word suggested to us for the purpose of formulating one of our most intimate insights and convictions, but a word that so far we were simply unable to find! We had it in [089] our possession, but were unable to express it. The collective reaction of faith, struggling towards theological understanding, thus prepares the way for the church's definition of dogma. 'The faith of the universal church... cannot err.'[41] The collective reaction of the whole of the church as a believing community, on a basis of the never-ceasing dynamic force of the light of faith, which is, in a confused manner, operative among all the members of the church, is infallible not only as a matter of principle but also in fact. Both essentially and intrinsically, this factor of continuity needs, however, to be supplemented by the church's teaching authority. This is not only because the constant support and the continuous guidance and correction of the teaching office of the church unceasingly influences the collective reaction of the faithful in an authoritative manner, both explicitly through the magisterium and implicitly through the governing office and the pastoral office of the church. It is also because the church's teaching office, because of its charism of infallibility, is the only authority which can authentically declare whether a collective reaction on the part of the whole community of faith took place in fact by virtue of the light of faith *(ex habitu fidei)* and not just on a basis of human factors. The teaching authority of the church is thus, as the 'teacher of the object of faith', not only the 'immediate norm of faith', but also the immediate and *ultimate norm* guaranteeing continuity in the development of dogma. History also bears witness to the fact that the church's teaching office solemnly declares a truth of faith to be a dogma only when the collective reaction of the believing community points clearly and explicitly in that direction and the community of [090] theologians puts forward convincing arguments. By this, I certainly do not mean that the sole function of the magisterium is to confirm at a later stage the reactions of the christian community.[42] The teaching office of the church has a decisive function not only in the actual definition of dogma, but also in the whole development of dogma. The subject of the church's active tradition is certainly the whole of the church's believing community, but this according to its inner, hierarchical structure. The ordinary members of the church form part of this active tradition, but they do so as ordinary believers—the hierarchy does

[41] Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 6, ad 3.

[42] For this point, see my article 'Overlevering', *Theologisch Woordenboek,* pt. 3, Roermond and Maaseik, 1958, esp. cols. 3691-2.

so as a hierarchy, in and through its teaching, governing, and pastoral office. These last two functions of the hierarchy are, implicitly or in experience, also an exercise of the teaching office itself. In addition, the church's teaching authority is the ultimately authentic and infallible instrument of the interpretation of tradition, of which the church's hierarchy as such and the ordinary believers, as the non-qualified members of the church, are the active subject. The hierarchy is therefore in an exceptional position not only because it is a special, qualified, and active instrument of tradition—as is the believing community in a non-hierarchical manner—but also because the teaching authority of the church is the exclusive *regula* of the tradition of faith. It is important therefore not to confuse the whole subject of active tradition in all its diversity of structure with the subject of the instrument that is the norm and the judge of this tradition.

We may therefore conclude that the converging activity of the light of faith
[091] in the community of faith of the church together with the church's infallible teaching office is the single structural principle of the unchangeable character of the faith throughout all its different phases of development. The laws and factors which cause any human ideology to mature, including implicit thought and reflective reasoning, thus play an active part in the development of dogma. As such, however, they cannot make a datum of faith develop in its properly *supernatural* element. For this reason, they only play an instrumental part with regard to the activity of the light of faith and the teaching authority of the church. The light of faith is, however, not revelation and has therefore no creative function which might, of its own accord, put forward new truths. It is then through external stimuli, the rhythm of universally human progress and self-consciousness, theological investigation, and so on that the critical activity of the light of faith and of the church's teaching office is provided with material. This is why human evolution is so closely interlaced with the development of dogma, why certain dogmas were defined at such a late stage, why most are formulated in the language of the period, and so on.

It is also important to stress that the power of assimilation of the light of faith does not make itself felt only *after* an implicit datum of faith has been made more fully explicit, but that its discreet activity is discernible throughout the whole process of development and maturity, and that the Holy Spirit himself, in and through this active grace of faith, both governs the unchangeable nature of dogma and guides its development according to the Father's saving intentions. Moreover, the light of faith possesses, in and through sanctifying grace, an inwardly finer, selective ability to react, since the
[092] gifts of the Holy Spirit inwardly complete what was already present as a germ in the act of faith as such. In this way, the critical faculty of the light of faith is made more pure, accurate, and penetrating. Finally, the only ultimate criterion of a true development in dogma is the teaching authority of the church. The

light of faith, with its vague sense, almost lost in the human consciousness, of being drawn by God to faith, is the fundamental principle of orientation in this development.

Part 2

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON REVELATION

Chapter 5

WHAT IS THEOLOGY?

Prefatory remark concerning terminology: development of the meaning of the word 'theology'

The term *theology* has, in the course of time, been applied with various meanings to different realities.

1. Initially, the word was used with reference to the mythical stories of the gods.[1] Theologians in this sense were the ancient poets, such as Homer and Hesiod, who wrote theogonies and told the myths of the Olympian gods. Theology, again in this sense, was contrasted with meteorology, which dealt in a more scientific manner with the divine heavenly bodies. Aristotle also on several occasions spoke of theology as poetic myths about the gods.[2] The view gradually became accepted, however, that these myths about the gods were simply a mythological form concealing true reference to God. Plato consciously dissociated the essential content of these myths from their mythological content. Aristotle also used the word *theology* with a new meaning, or at least changed its field of application. Making a threefold division of science or [096] scientific knowledge *(epistēmē)* into physical, mathematical, and theological[3], he raised theology to the level of a philosophical science, and indeed made it the 'first' or supreme form of philosophical thought.[4] This 'first philosophy' was concerned with the highest causes of the visible divine astral world. Both meanings of the word—the older theology of the theogonies and 'myths of the gods', and the newer 'philosophical' theology—continued to exist side by side, and the first remained the generally accepted meaning in the language of the people.

[1] Plato, Republic 379A.
[2] Aristotle, *Meteorologica* 2, 1, 2; *Metaphysics* 2, 4, 12; etc.
[3] *Metaphysics* 10, 7, 9.
[4] *Metaphysics* 10, 7, 7.

The first sense lay behind Aristotle's use of the cognate verb *theologein,* too: it meant 'to speculate about the gods' in the 'myths of the gods' sense.[5] Much later, in the hellenistic period, the word meant—in the context of emperor-worship—'to venerate as a god'.

Though the word *theologia* did not acquire a wholly new meaning in the pseudo-aristotelian work *De Mundo*[6], it did nevertheless acquire a new application in view of the swing towards cosmic religion. The deities were no longer the gods of Olympus, but the cosmos itself—the *meteora,* or astral bodies. Meteorology had now become the sphere of theology.

2. These ideas persisted up to the patristic period. Augustine was to adopt Varro's classic definition:

> There are three kinds of theology, that is, of the discipline which is concerned with
> [097] the gods: one of these is the mythic, the second is the physical, and the third is the civil.[7]

In this definition, the 'civil' kind of theology *(theologiae genus civile)* means the theology of public worship— in other words, the worship of the emperor as god. The term *theology* was christianised only very late because of the initial fear and reluctance on the part of christians to use pagan terminology. The Greek fathers used the word *theologians* only in the sense of the ancient poets who wrote about the gods. The concept was, however, gradually accepted into christianity. Although Origen still continued to use the word *theologians* in the pagan sense, he did refer to theology as a 'teaching about God and Christ'.[8] Even the word *theologein*—to worship the emperor as god—was christianised, and came to mean 'to confess Christ truly as God'. It was perhaps Eusebius who played the greatest part in the christianisation of the term *theology,* in a sense contrary to the pagan meaning. This is clear from the phrase 'the theology according to Christ'[9], 'sermo de Christo Deo'. The frequent use of *theology* in the *corpus dionysiacum* finally consecrated the word, although it was used there with many different shades of meaning, in accordance with the way in which we know God—*theologia mystica, theologia negativa,* and so on. It was only from the fourth century onwards that the Greek fathers used the word theology in the sense of the 'sermo de Deo vero' ('treatise on the true God'). Under the

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[5] *Metaphysics* 1, 3, 6.

[6] That is, so long as we may accept the view of A. J. Festugière, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste, II: le Dieu Cosmique,* Paris 1949, 598-605 (Appendix III).

[7] Tria genera theologiae sunt, i.e. rationis quae de diis explicatur: eorumque unum mythicum, alterum physicum, tertium civile' (*De Civitate Dei* VI, 5). See also Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 94, a. 1; *ER* c. 1, lect 7, fin.

[8] *Contra Celsum* VI, 18.

[9] *De hist. eccl*. I,1,7.

influence of the Byzantine theologians of the fourth century, the concept came [098]
to have a special meaning—*theologia* was contrasted with *oikonomia,* or the theology of the mystery of Christ. Theology meant the *Sacra Doctrina de Trinitate,* that is, everything concerned with the doctrine of God as opposed to the christian plan of salvation.[10] This twofold division into *theologia simplex* and *oikonomia* is still preserved in present-day Graeco-Russian theology.[11] At a later stage, especially in the writings of Evagrius and Maximus Confessor, theology acquired the meaning of the sublime 'mystical knowledge of God'.

3. The word *theology* was not adopted quite so readily by the western church. Although Augustine occasionally, and by way of exception, referred to the *vera theologia,* as opposed to pagan theology, the word was by no means generally accepted. Abelard was the first in the west consistently to use the word *theology* in the christian theological sense.[12] In the tradition of Abelard, as in the Byzantine theology, the word *theology* tended to mean a treatise about God himself, rather than the theology of the mystery of Christ, which was called the *beneficia* (lit. 'benefits'). The term *theology* was not in fact fully adopted by the [099]
medieval theologians subsequent to Abelard. To express the *sacra doctrina,* the augustinian term *doctrina Christiana* was preferred from the twelfth century until after Aquinas.

Aquinas himself seldom used the term *theology,* and whenever he did so he used it in a very different sense from the sense in which we should use it now. The aristotelian influence is, of course, especially marked in Aquinas' thought. For him, metaphysics was *scientia divina sive theologica* ('the divine or theological science').[13] He sometimes contrasted *theologia philosophica* ('philosophical theology') with *theologia Sacrae Scripturae* ('the theology of holy scripture').[14] He was not here distinguishing between what we should now call 'theodicy' and 'theology', but rather between the teaching of the pagan philosophers about

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[10] See J. Haussleiter, *Trinitarischer Glaube und Christusbekenntnis in der alten Kirche,* Gütersloh, 1920, esp. 358-60; see also G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought,* London 1963.[3] In the case of certain authors, for example, Tatian and Tertullian, *oikonomia* has the meaning of the intercommunication of the divine persons—the 'monarchy' or unity of the three divine persons is preserved by the *oikonomia.*

[11] See M. Jugie, *Theologia dogmatica christianorum Orientalium ab Ecclesia catholica dissidentium*, Paris, 1926-35, II, esp. 26-7.

[12] See J. de Ghellinck, *Le Mouvement théologique du XIIe siècle,* Bruges, 1948[2], p. 83 and p. 92; J. Rivière, 'Theologia', *RSR(US),* 16 (1936), pp. 47-57.

[13] *AM*, Proem.; *BT,* q. 5, a. 1.

[14] *BT,* q. 5, a. 1, 4: 'theologia quae in S. Scriptura traditur' ('the theology handed down in holy scripture') (according to Decker's edition, p. 195), as opposed to 'theologia quam philosophi prosequuntur' ('the theology pursued by the philosophers'). See also *ST* I, q. 1, a. 1, ad 2: 'theologia quae pertinet ad S. Doctrinam' ('the theology which pertains to sacred doctrine'), as opposed to 'theologia quae pars philosophiae ponitur' ('the theology which is posited as a division of philosophy').

God and the christian teaching about God—which, in the case of Aquinas, also includes what we should now call 'theodicy'.[15] A theological study was therefore, for Aquinas, a study concerned with the 'first cause' of things, whereas a philosophical study was concerned with things in their own value.[16] Thus, the study of the human soul, because of its direct relationship with God,
[100] was called by Aquinas a theological study, whereas the study of the human body was not.[17] Nonetheless, Aquinas gave the aristotelian term *theology* his own distinctive shade of meaning[18], since, on a basis of man's experiential insight into divine things, his intelligence is defective[19], and revelation in fact comes to his assistance to a great extent in the case of natural truths about God.

Aquinas seldom used the word *theology* as an exact synonym for *sacra doctrina*[20], and, whenever he did so he generally used it in the etymological sense.[21] It will therefore be clear that the term theology did not have the full meaning in the scholastic period that it has today.

4. It was in the period between Aquinas and Duns Scotus that the word theology came to be used as the technical term for what had previously been known as *Sacra Doctrina.* At the same time, it lost the shade of meaning that it had had in the writings of Abelard. It was especially speculative theology that was influential in bringing about this change from *Sacra Doctrina* to 'theology'. The wide meaning which theology had had as *Sacra Doctrina* was thrust into the background by the discursive procedure or *modus argumentativus* which had been adopted by theology, with the result that theology became (in a certain restricted sense: see below) a *scientia conclusionum* ('science of conclusions'). The
[101] older name for the theologian, *Magister in Sacra Pagina* (lit. 'Master in Holy Writ'), was also changed at this time to *Magister in Sacra Theologia* (lit. 'Master in Sacred Theology'). There is no question, then, but that the classic term *theology* was placed under the sign of speculative theology from the very moment of its birth.

5. This, of course, had unfortunate effects later. The single *Sacra Doctrina* of the Middle Ages was divided in the modern period into all kinds of virtually independent disciplines. The first form of theology to develop outside the scholastic theology was the *ascetica et mystica,* and the term *mystical theology* was originally used in contrast to the term *scholastic theology.* Then, towards the end

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[15] See *SCG* I, 4.
[16] *ST* I-II, q. 71, a. 6, ad 5.
[17] *ST* I, q. 75, Prol.; see also *2 Sent.* Prol.
[18] See, for example, *ST* I, q. 1, a. 1.
[19] *SCG* I, 2.
[20] See, for example, *1 Sent.* Prol., 4, obi. 2 in contr.; *ER* Prol.; *BT,* q. 2, a. 3, ad 7.
[21] Theology is the 'sermo de Deo' ('discussion or treatise on God'): *ST* I, q. 1, a. 7, sed c.

of the sixteenth century, moral theology, which had become increasingly concerned with casuistry, was separated from the one *Sacra Doctrina.* The 'back to the sources' movement of renaissance humanism then gave rise to the distinction between 'positive' and 'scholastic' theology. The seventeenth century also saw the emergence of 'apologetic' theology.[22] The part which remained after all these divisions, was christened 'dogmatic' theology. The word *dogmaticus* had been used, in contrast to *ethicus,* even before the seventeenth century, but it was at this period that the terms *dogmaticus* and *scholasticus* were first used in contrast to each other.[23] In this context, 'dogmatic' theology, as a division of positive theology and in contrast to scholastic theology, meant the theological discipline that aimed to define precisely the [102] limits of revealed religion as distinct from all the questions discussed by the scholastics. This accounts for the expression: '[intellectus] in dogmaticis captivus, in scholasticis liber' ('the intellect is captive in dogmatic theology, but in scholastic theology it is free'). It is also only in the light of this distinction that it is possible to understand the title of certain manuals of the period: *Theologia Dogmatico-Scholastica.* It was only later that dogmatic theology came to mean what it means today.

It is not possible even to give an outline of the origin and development of theology in the limited space available in a dictionary. Historical notes will be given at appropriate points in the following synthesis, in which an attempt is made to show what theology really is.

In order to establish the concrete structure of theology and its distinctive methodical procedures, it is not possible to proceed from the natural data of what scientific work is, whether these are the data of the aristotelian scientific concept or those of the modern, positive, phenomenological, and 'human' sciences. The structure of revelation itself and of the act of faith associated with it must suggest the type of reflection to which faith in Christ can lead. Only then shall we be able, at the same time by appealing to the human sciences, to throw light on the scientific structure of theology in all its many activities. This at the same time vindicates my division of this outline of the nature of theology into the following sections.

[22] See H. Busson, *La pensée religieuse française de Charon à Pascal,* Paris, 1933, esp. chapters XI and XIII.
[23] See O. Ritschl, 'Das Wort dogmaticus in der Geschichte des Sprachgebrauches bis zum Aufkommen des Ausdruckes Theologia dogmatica', *Festgabe J. Kaftan,* Tübingen, 1920.

[103]

1. FAITH IN THE GOD OF REVELATION AS THE POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR AND THE CONSTANTLY FERTILE BREEDING-GROUND OF THEOLOGY

1. Faith as the basis of theology as a science

Religion is essentially a personal communion between God and men. This personal contact with the living God cannot be established by human effort. It can only be established by the initiative of grace with the divine revelation that is implied in it. *Salvation* is the very act of the encounter between God and man, in which the first fundamental contact is established by faith. This divine revelation makes history. It would take us too far from our subject to discuss this question fully, and I must be content to summarise briefly the theme of saving history (or history of salvation). The history that is made by men becomes itself the material in and through which God makes saving history and through which he accomplishes his revelation. God's saving activity is revealed by becoming history, and it becomes history by being revealed. The prophetic word throws light on this saving activity and makes it present for us *as* an act of God. All this was ultimately expressed scripturally—in writing—in the bible, under the divine guarantee that it was a faithful reproduction of the consciousness of salvation that God himself wished to realise in the whole of mankind in and through his chosen people, Israel and the church.

There are distinct phases in this historical self-disclosure of the God of redemption. The first was the *constitutive phase of revelation,* the *revelatio publica constitutiva,* the stage in which Christ appeared in human form as the public revelation of God, both in his prehistory of the Old Testament and in his personal completion in human action—the *mysteria carnis Christi* ('the mysteries
[104] of Christ's humanity'). In this phase, which closed with the end of the apostolic period, God revealed himself definitively and the eschatological age dawned: we are redeemed. This constitutive phase was followed by the saving history of the church, living from the constituted phase of salvation. Expressed in terms of revelation, it is usual to refer to this as the *explicative and continuing phase of revelation.* It is in this period that what has taken place for all of us in Christ as our prototype and representative is accomplished within humanity in and through the church, on the basis of the completed mystery of Christ. Faith is conditioned by this revelation, in which we are addressed by God. Faith is therefore a way of knowing. This knowing has a distinctive character in that it is a knowledge which comes about by our being addressed, by our being confidentially informed, through God's mercy. God speaks to us inwardly through the inward grace of faith, the *locutio interior,* and at the same time we are addressed from outside by the God of revelation—this last is the aspect of *fides ex auditu.* This 'external address' is the Old-Testament history of salvation, accompanied by the prophetic word, and its climax: the human appearance of

Christ himself in word and deed as addressed to the apostles. Finally, it is the life of the church, in her activity and in her kerygmatic word, by which man living now is addressed and in which the glorified Christ really lives. Within the church, we believe in the mystery of Christ as the revelation of God—we believe in the christian historical plan of salvation in which the trinitarian mystery of salvation which transcends history is realised for and in us. The entire theological method is determined by this structure of revelation. First of all, however, we must ascertain how faith in this revelation gives rise to a [105] reflection which we have called theology.

2. Faith as an inner demand for theology

The act of faith is incipient theology both in its subjective aspect, that is, as seen from the point of view of the believing subject, and in its objective aspect, that is, the content of faith. Both of these aspects implicate each other, but I propose to deal with them separately for the sake of clarity.

a. The subjective aspect

Because of its inward nature as a consent in faith to a mystery, this act of faith contains an aspect of rest and an aspect of unrest, with the result that both Augustine and Aquinas defined the act of faith as a synthesis of firm consent and intellectual speculation: 'credere est cum assentione cogitare' (to believe is to reflect with consent).[24] Consent in faith permits of no vacillation. It is not irresolute and unstable, but of its very nature a firm consent on the part of the human mind to the content of revelation, a consent which leaves no room for doubt. It is, however, not given either on a basis of intellectual understanding or on a basis of the inward evidence of what is offered to us for our consent—the reality of salvation. On the contrary, the human mind is conditioned by a divine impulse by grace of the will, which thereby 'desires' the reality of salvation that presents itself.[25] The intellect assents to the truth and consents to it, as it is included in the impulse by grace of the will. Believing [106] is an existential attitude of the whole man confronted by the ultimate meaning of his life. Despite the inward non-evidence of the reality of salvation that presents itself, intellectual consent in faith can be understood if viewed in this light. But, precisely for this reason, the human intellect, which is essentially attuned to the inward evidence of reality, is in principle not satisfied. The

[24] Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 1; *Verit.* q. 14, a. 1.

[25] Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 9, analyses the process thus: 'Ipsum autem credere est actus intellectus assentientis veritati divinae ex imperio voluntatis a Deo motae per gratiam' ('But believing itself is an act of the intellect asserting to divine truth at the behest of a will moved by God through grace').

intellect does not accept the mystery for intrinsic reasons. At the level of intelligibility, absolutely certain consent to the object of faith is therefore essentially associated with a natural quest on the part of the mind, because of the mind's natural objectivity. Consent and a desire for understanding are thus both essential aspects of men's act of faith.[26]

This need causes an extreme tension in the human mind, because the reality of salvation presents itself as the sublime meaning of human life. However slightly and in whatever way this need to reflect may show itself in people, according to their different characters, there is always an incipient theological reflection present in the act of faith which is at the same time a *fides quaerens intellectum* ('faith seeking understanding') in germ. Faith is, in germ, virtually theology. The human openness to the evidence of reality is therefore, from the point of view of the believing subject, the basis of the possibility of theology.

[107] It is important, however, to note in this connection that this intellectual orientation of the human mind is not a kind of intellectual curiosity. The meaning of the reality that presents itself is at the same time revealed as the *value* for human life, in other words, as that which makes life worth living.[27] That is to say, it is in the total reaction of the human person to the mystery that the origin of theological reflection is to be found—the element of knowledge in this is only the formal aspect, but as an element of an integrally human activity and reaction.

b. The objective aspect—the content of faith

a. If speculation were not possible from the objective aspect of the act of faith, then theology would itself be impossible, since it is the objective possibility which provides the basis for the subjective.

Although the content of faith may be a mystery to the human mind, this does not imply a belief in something that is devoid of meaning. The revealed mystery of salvation presents itself as something *meaningful*. If this were not so, then every act of faith made in respect of this mystery would be impossible.[28]

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[26] See Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 67, a. 3: 'Imperfectio cognitionis est de ratione fidei, ponitur enim in eius definitione' ('Imperfection of knowledge is of the essence of faith, for it is posited in the definition of faith').

[27] See Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 4, a. 2, ad 3: 'Veritas prima, quae est fidei obiectum, est finis omnium desideriorum et actionum nostrarum' (That supreme truth, which is the object of faith, is the end of all our desires and actions'); hence, *ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 10: 'Cum enim homo habet promptam voluntatem ad credendum, *diligit* veritatem creditam et super ea excogitat et amplectitur si quas rationes ad hoc invenire potest' ('For when a man has a will that is quick to believe, he *values* the truth believed, and on the basis of it he looks for and welcomes any arguments he can find to support the belief').

[28] *ST* II-II, q. 8, a. 8, ad 2: 'Non enim posset homo assentire credendo aliquibus propositis, nisi ea aliqualiter intelligeret' ('For a man could not assent by believing certain particular arguments unless he understood them in some sense or other').

Mystery and inner contradiction are two totally different things. Wherever [108]
reality is present and wherever it announces itself to the human consciousness, even though it may be transcendent and therefore a mystery, then it can necessarily be assimilated by human thought. The mystery of salvation, however transcendent it may be, must also to some extent be clear to the human mind. A mystery is not an entirely unknown quantity. Enough of it is revealed in a veiled manner for us to be able to live from it. What is more, the content of faith is an answer to a problem of human life. Man himself is unable to unveil the ultimate meaning of his life and is therefore confronted with an insoluble problem. The content of God's initiative in grace, which is voluntary and not owing to man, is therefore a priori meaningful with regard to the already existing problem of human life. Whenever God thus reveals himself as the meaning of our existence, this humanly-unsuspected and transcendent answer to the problem of human life, which is meaningful in itself, must inevitably be experienced as meaningful by the human mind. In other words, the content of faith implies a certain intelligibility, and is therefore open to reflection.

b. Moreover, in fact the reality of revelation is offered to us as saving history. It has entered human history and makes use of concepts, images, and words drawn from the normal human experience of life. The God of revelation has accomplished a deeper mystery in this history, which is accessible to us, and in these human concepts and images. It is, of course, true that we can only understand the supernatural dimension— the mystery of this history and these concepts—in and through faith. But the transcendental content of faith at the same time discloses a perspective on to its own inner intelligibility. The infinite [109]
is disclosed in the finite, without destroying it. And in this way, the human desire to reflect can be directed towards the content of faith. Faith itself is consequently an inner demand for theology.

3. The scientific extension of the reflection that is inherent in the life of faith

The reflection that is inherent in the life of faith can take two forms. The first of these forms can be encountered in all the faithful: it is the spontaneous, undeliberate reflection on faith which all christians pursue. But it can be extended to a deliberate, methodical, and systematic reflection, and this is precisely theology. Theology, then, is something that is inwardly present in the life of faith, but extended to the level of critical —that is, of scientific —reflection. This provides an indication of the scientific character of theology. But this is not all. Theology as a science is concerned with reality itself, in contrast to the purely positive sciences, which are concerned only with the study of phenomena as factual data, and in contrast to the formal sciences, such

as mathematics. Theology attempts to throw light on the reality of revelation itself in its inner intelligibility. But in this we are directly confronted with this most important idea, namely, that the basis of the scientific nature of theology—that is, of its task of throwing light on the reality itself of revelation—is nothing less than faith itself. Without faith there can be no scientific theology. The capacity of this science to grasp reality can only be based in the supernatural cognitive aspect of the act of faith, because it is in this only that contact is made with the reality of revelation. It is possible to study
[110] christianity scientifically outside this faith, and even to study its dogmatic content (as, for example, buddhism is studied in comparative religion), but in that case we shall be concerned with a purely 'humane' activity, and not with theology proper, which is concerned with pronouncements about the supernatural reality as this *is* in itself. It was for this reason that Aquinas could say that 'faith is as it were the condition of theology'[29]. It is important, therefore, to stress the *religious* character of theology as a science. This does not mean that the specialised scientific activity of theology itself is a religious act—I shall deal more fully with this point later on—but it does mean that theology is a science that is concerned with a *religious reality,* with the result that to live in this religious reality, which is possible only through faith, remains the basis of the scientific value of theology, that is, its concern with reality. In this respect, theology is really the scientific, conscious evaluation and expression of the content of the church's experience of faith. Theology is then 'fides in statu scientiae' ('faith at the level of a science'). Since, however, theology is a science of faith, a science that is concerned with mysteries, this special tension between 'intelligibility' and 'mystery' will determine the whole method of theology.

2. THEOLOGY AS A SCIENCE OF FAITH: ITS DISTINCTIVE FIELD OF VISION

Theology is christian faith *in* human reflection. This is really all there is to it. The law of faith becomes visible in human thought. The material datum of theology is thus precisely the same as that of faith—the content of revelation.
[111] But the attitude of mind of faith towards this reality is different from the attitude of mind of theology. Faith regards the content of revelation as *credibile,* that is, as the object of faithful assent to God's testimony—it is the act of encounter with God in its fundamental contact. Theology presupposes this act of faith, but considers the reality of revelation as *intelligibile,* that is, as something whose content is to be understood, as something with an intelligible inner meaning and value—*credibile prout intelligibile* ('the object of faith

[29] Fides est quasi habitus theologiae' *(BT,* q. 5, a. 4, ad 8).

according as it is the object of understanding'). As a result of this, the immediate subjective principle of theology, or the theological subject, is the human mind, embraced and illuminated by faith—the organic working unity of the light of faith and the light of the intellect. The first Vatican Council spoke of 'reason... illuminated by faith'[30], while Aquinas had spoken of 'reason led by the hand of faith'[31]—faith itself *in* human thought. In this way, theology is formally distinguished from faith, in which it nonetheless has its constant breeding-ground. It is precisely because of this distinction that it is possible for the material object of theology to be wider than that of faith. For, although this material object is, in the first place, the content of revelation itself, many secondary objects are also—because of the formal point of view from which this content is regarded—included within theology, with the result that truths which are perhaps also studied by other sciences contribute to the interpretation of the content of faith. In this connection, it is also clear that theology, although based on faith, is a formal science and not a religious act.[32] It [112] is a *study,* even though it is a study of religious realities. It is therefore in itself a *natural activity,* flowing from the act of faith and serving the life of faith, but it may not become something devotional. For this reason, it may not even be claimed that theology is impossible without a personally experienced religious life.[33] The probable explanation for this modern tendency is that it is a reaction against a theology which had become divorced from the reality of faith, but it can be of little use to a properly conceived theology. A certain affective penetration of faith in and through a well-practised christian life undoubtedly exists alongside scientific reflection on faith—'an understanding [of faith] deriving as it were from the state of grace'[34]. But this is on an entirely different level—it is, in fact, the christian life itself. Furthermore, a disregard of scientific theology will not ipso facto bring about this affective knowledge of faith. On the other hand, it must be recognised that this pure experience of faith, which can give a saint a deeper 'feeling' for the divine than ten great theologians may possess between them, creates the optimum atmosphere in which—presupposing the scientific nature of theological research—theology can come to an increasingly pure and trustworthy judgement. The christian experience of life harmonises the mind with the reality of revelation, which is precisely the field of the theologian's work. This unity of intimate christian life and theological acumen was precisely what formed the deep 'theological sense' of

[30] 'Ratio... fide illustrata', DS 3016 (=DR 1796).
[31] 'Ratio manuducta per fidem' (*1 Sent.* Prol., a. 3, sol. 3).
[32] See Aquinas, *ST* I, q. 1, a. 6, ad 3: 'per studium habetur' ('it is maintained by study').
[33] Vague and imprecise ideas of this kind can be found, for example in the otherwise interesting work by T. Soiron, *Heilige Theologie,* Regensburg, 1935.
[34] 'Intelligentia [fidei] quasi ex habitu gratiae' (Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 9, a. 3, ad 3.)

which those saints who were also theologians were so often living witnesses.
[113] But we must be careful not to confuse these issues. The influence of the personal spiritual life on theology is formally only an inspirational power, the most suitable sphere from which to enter the field of theology. But it cannot replace the scientific work of theology and, from the theological point of view, it is of no value unless these affective insights are translated into theological terms. However much they may influence each other, it would be wrong to identify such different levels of life. The great contribution made by Aquinas, in making for the first time the necessary distinctions here and in giving to everything its proper place, should not be ignored, and theology once again be treated as an undifferentiated stage.[35] In brief, then, to claim with Casel, Soiron and others that theology is impossible without *habitus caritatis* ('the condition of charity'), is a fundamental misconception of the real function of theology and a confusion of theology with other tasks of the life of the church. If this proper function of theology is misunderstood, there is every likelihood that theology will not be able to produce precisely what the church expects of it. To conclude, then: theology, although it proceeds from faith, although it constantly presupposes this faith and serves it[36], is formally a question of scientific activity and insight, of research and of methodical precision.

Historical note: so-called 'virtual revelation' as the 'lumen quo' of theology

[114] The organic co-operation between faith and intellect was, in later scholasticism, related in a one-sided way— based on the aristotelian model—exclusively to the discursive function of theology, and this co-operation and its object were called 'virtual revelation'. This meant that theology was from the very beginning defined as a *scientia conclusionum,* a science of conclusions only, and that the other aspects of theology were in fact devalued to the level of pre-theological activities. We shall see that the discursive function of theology does, in a very special sense, form a genuine part of theology, but that it is not the only aspect. Although it is possible, from an aristotelian point of view, as far as this discursive function is concerned, to call the light in which theology regards everything 'virtual revelation'—that is, the co-operation of faith and intellect in the discursive function of theology—, this means that theology is limited to only one function. That is why this term is not to be found in Aquinas, although the idea, at least in the context of theology as a *scientia*

[35] See part 2, chapter 10, section 2 'Truth or relevance for the Christian life in the scholastics', on pp. [266-284] below.
[36] See H. de Hannibaldis, *In I Sent.,* q. 1, a. 2: 'rota theologia ordinatur ad fidem nutriendam' (Theology is directed wholly to the nurturing of faith').

conclusionum[37], is certainly present—but nevertheless it is quite clear that the light of *sacra doctrina* was never called 'virtual revelation' by Aquinas. The later scholastics were misled by the word *revelabile* in Aquinas, although, as far as I can estimate, he used the word only twice.[38] Just as the words *scibile, sensibile,* and *credibile* have the meaning of 'the object of...', so the term *revelabile* clearly has no other meaning than that of 'the object of (formal) revelation'. It cannot, then, mean 'what is virtually revealed'. This is also clearly borne out by Albert the Great who, in his own *Summa,* written after Aquinas' *Summa,* alluded to this article of his former pupil and clearly conceived *revelabilitas* in the sense of formal revelation.[39] The later scholastic interpretation overlooked the very first [115] question in Aquinas' *Summa.* It is clear from this question that Aquinas was not aiming to define theology as science rather than faith, but to situate *sacra doctrina* as a distinctive type, in contrast to the human, natural sciences which are completely outside the sphere of revelation.[40] He also showed, in this question that revelation is the illuminating principle of this new type of science.[41] Consequently, everything that is studied in any way in the light of the truths of revelation forms part of the study of theology, whether these truths belong to the *praeambulum fidei,* whether they are deduced from it as conclusions, or whether they are themselves revealed. All the interpretations of the word *revelabilia* that have been suggested therefore seem to me to be one-sided. For E. Gilson, it was ultimately the christian philosophy.[42] For J. Bonnefoy, it was the natural truths which did not need to be revealed, but which were in fact revealed.[43] For L. Charlier, the *revelabilia* were exclusively the truths of faith, or the *praeambula fidei* and the interpretations of faith.[44] For M. Gagnebet, as for the older scholastics, it coincides with the *virtualiter revelata,* that is, with the content of 'virtual revelation'.[45] All these theologians have in fact thrown light on only one aspect of *revelabilia* as seen by Aquinas: for him, [116] on the other hand, *revelabilia* implied all these things. Both Charlier and Bonnefoy misunderstood the meaning of the first question of the *Summa,* and interpreted Aquinas as saying that formal revelation was the light of theology as a science, with the result that the light of theology was identified with the

[37] This was for Aquinas only one function of *sacra doctrina.*
[38] *ST* I, q. 1, a. 3, c, and ad 2.
[39] *Tract,* i, q. 3, m. 2.
[40] See *ST* I, q. 1, a. 1.
[41] *ST* I, q. 1, a. 6, ad 2: 'Propria autem huius scientiae cognitio est per revelationem' ('but the distinctive mode of learning of this science is by means of revelation').
[42] *Le Thomisme,* Paris 1948[5] (introductory chapter).
[43] *La nature de la théologie selon saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Paris and Bruges, 1939.
[44] *Essai sur le problème théologique*, Thuillies, 1938.
[45] 'La nature de la théologie speculative', *RT* 43 (1943), pp. 1-39, 213-55, and 645-74. See also R. Guelluy, *Philosophie et théologie chez Guillaume d'Occham,* Louvain 1947,41 *n.* 1.

light of faith. I cannot analyse Aquinas' first question in detail here, but the result of an analysis as far as the term *revelabilia* is concerned is this. It is precisely because holy scripture or *sacra doctrina* is concerned with truths which are formally revealed that all those truths that belong in one way or another (either directly or indirectly, previously or consequentially, or even purely factually and pragmatically) to holy scripture, or are in some way connected with it, also belong to the science that regards these as the object of its study. The *revelatum,* or that which is formally revealed, is the principle of their unity, and in this way it is clear that the 'discipline in accordance with divine revelation and over against the philosophical sciences'[46] forms a distinctive type which is different from the other sciences. It is clear that the question of the light of theology as distinct from that of faith is not even raised here—it was not Aquinas' aim to investigate it in this context. His view is entirely based on the aristotelian idea:

> Despite the fact that there are certain distinctions in the objects of knowledge in accordance with their natures, they nevertheless pertain to a single science provided
[117] that they are known through the same principles, since they will not be distinct insofar as they are objects of knowledge.[47]

3. THE POSITIVE AND THE SPECULATIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE ONE THEOLOGY

Revelation is accomplished in and through history, and we live now from this revelation-in-word and revelation-in-reality—in and through the sacramental reality of the church and through the church's service of the word. The history of salvation and the word give us, by virtue of the light of faith, a view of the revealed reality, with which we associate ourselves in faith. As we have based the possibility of a theology in the objective and the subjective aspect of the act of faith, so too are the positive and the speculative functions of theology justified in these two aspects.

The structure of the human mind possesses a double, complementary orientation. The human mind seeks first to become conscious of the data that present themselves purely as data, but in addition it seeks to understand the sense, the intelligibility or the *quidditas,* of these data—it seeks to know what *is* reality. This positive and speculative orientation of the human mind— two aspects of one and the same fundamental orientation towards reality—finds its

[46] 'Doctrina secundum revelationem divinam praeter philosophicas scientias' (*ST* I, q. 1, a. 1).
[47] 'Quantumcumque sint aliqua diversascibilia secundum suam naturam, dummodo per eadem principia sciantur, pertinent ad unam scientiam, quia non erunt iam diversa in quantum sunt scibilia' (*AAP,* c. 28, lect. 41 *n.* 11).

corresponding point of contact in the structure of revelation. This should become clear from the following analyses.

1. The positive theological function of the one theology: positive theology [118]

With reference to the bible, I said that theological reflection about the content of revelation required a positive examination of the way in which God allowed his divinity and the meaning of our humanity to be experienced by men in his saving activity. If we wish to know what God is saying to us and how he has addressed this invitation to salvation to us, we cannot do this without making an extensive examination of Israel as the people of God and of the man Jesus who appeared in concrete form among us as the Son of the Father and to whom his apostles bore witness. It is consequently the task of theology to subject to close examination this living sense of salvation on the part of ancient Israel and of the new Israel which was expressed under divine guarantee in scripture, and which lived on, increasingly illuminated on the basis of this constitutive revelation, in the post-apostolic church. The content of revelation is defined by the teaching authority of the church as dogma only in certain points. A great deal of this content of revelation is still not dogmatically defined and, although such a definition is itself adequately true, it cannot exhaust the defined truth. Theology, the science of the integral content of revelation, must therefore diligently study first the Old and New Testaments and then the writings which have testified to the faith throughout the course of time. It must moreover study all these writers—men who have themselves tried to explore and understand the content of revelation—from the fathers of the church down to those of the present day, without neglecting a single period, since God has never failed to keep his end up. It is not only the fact that something has been revealed that is of great importance for a deeper understanding of the intentions of the God of [119] revelation. It is also important to know how it was revealed and how it was made explicit in terms of faith. Insight into the growth itself of the revelation of the Old Testament, of the living mystery of Christ, and of the datum of faith towards dogmatic definition provides us with an initial insight into the content of faith.

The theologian does not, however, carry out this whole positive task formally as a historian. Positive theology is not a historical science, although it has to make use of strictly historical methods as an aid. But the theologian does this as a theologian—from the vantage-point of the church's life of faith today, and guided by the teaching authority of the church, he studies the sources of revelation and the various testimonies of the faith throughout the centuries. Faith and the teaching office of the church thus guide his positive study, in which he makes use of the historical and scientific method. He therefore studies biblical theology, patristic theology, and symbolic theology (the study of the

symbola, or authoritative confessions, of faith and of the documents of the church's teaching office) in order to understand what God has intended to be the content of revelation as purely and as integrally as possible. He has therefore to determine—in a scientific, and consequently in a fallible, manner, with the result that he is ultimately subject to the criticism of the church's teaching authority—whether a given proposition has in fact been revealed; whether it has in fact already been presented as such by the church, or has only lived in the universal preaching of the church, or is merely a constant datum of tradition (for example, as something unanimously affirmed in the patristic writings); whether it is an authentic doctrine of the church or only a natural
[120] truth which is, however, so closely connected with faith that, if it were not accepted, faith itself would suffer: and finally, whether it is only a *theologoumenon* (theological conclusion), a question which can be freely discussed. The positive theologian also has to determine what is no more than the 'clothing' setting of the affirmation of faith in, for example, a given scriptural or patristic datum, and therefore what there is in this datum that is restricted to the human view of the world and of life at a particular period of history. It is, however, of paramount importance in this connection that positive theology achieves an initial synthesis which is suggested by the content itself of revelation. This synthesis should indicate how, in and through the temporal plan of salvation, the trinitarian mystery of God appears more and more clearly as salvation for mankind, and at the same time that this totality of revelation is echoed in every partial truth of the faith and in what way it is thus echoed. All this is not in the first place a question of speculative construction, but of a faithful study of the history of salvation of Israel and of the church. The real life of faith of ancient Israel, the historical appearance of Christ, the apostolic tradition, and the whole life of the church thus unmistakably show themselves to be the fundamental data of the theologian. It is an insight into all these that theology has to seek.

It is clear therefore that the positive function of theology is not just a pre-theological preliminary stage of speculative theology. It is quite simply theology itself, and as such is subject to the same light *(lumen quo)* of the intellect in close and lasting association with faith. Positive and speculative theology are not two types of theological thought, or two distinct theological
[121] disciplines, but two equally essential functions of one and the same science, the unity of which consists in the close co-operation between the light of the intellect and the light of faith, the latter always assuming the leading function. Positive theology, then, does not aim to bring 'proofs' from the past that will establish the claims of a present-day speculative proposition. Recourse is made to the past in an attempt to achieve a deeper insight into the mystery of salvation from the vantage-point of the various phases of the objectively

growing revelation of the Old Testament and from the perspective of the phases of development in the history of dogma in the dynamic yet consistent life of faith of the church.[48] Every period is marked by its own characteristic point of view, its own emphases and its own reticences. That is why it is only a broadly based positive theological examination—one which does not neglect any single period of the whole tradition of faith—that can safeguard us against one-sided syntheses. Positive theology, then, does not simply provide us with useful pieces of information with which a speculative theology can be embellished or into which a prefabricated speculative theology can be fitted. Speculative theology is powerless without contributions from positive theology— theological reflection aims at the inner intelligibility of what positive theology is able to dig up of the wealth of revelation. In this sense, in positive theology speculative theology has already begun. It is not possible to [122] separate these two functions into two successive stages of theological thought. For, although positive theology makes use of purely historical methods, in this historical investigation it is concerned with the reality of faith itself. It aims at attaining a better understanding of the mystery of salvation in which the bible, the patristic period, the scholastic period, and all the other periods of the church were interested. Everywhere and at all times the mystery of salvation discloses something of its inner, integral content. But every expression and every synthesis of the faith is the exponent of limited possibilities of expression and points of view. Even in scripture it is possible to find variously orientated views of the mystery of Christ, with the result that, within the unity of the one faith, a synoptic, a pauline, and a johannine image of Christ can be distinguished. One of the functions of positive theology is to distinguish the thematic differences reflected in these various views so that speculative theology may achieve an integral synthesis in which all these aspects of the faith receive their proper emphasis.

It will at the same time be clear that a pure *théologie du magistère*—a theology which has as its point of departure only that which has been dogmatically defined by the extraordinary teaching office of the church—will inevitably be an incomplete theology. The church's definitions, which have generally been occasioned by heresies and false teaching, are only a few crystallisations of a far richer life of faith. What is more, it has often happened that only those aspects that were attacked by heresy were dogmatically defined and that there was no

[48] See Pius XII, *Humani Generis* (DS 3886 = DR 3014): 'sacrorum fontium studio sacrae disciplinae semper iuvenescunt; dum contra speculatio, quae ulteriorem sacri depositum neglegit, *ut experiundo novimus,* sterilis evadit' ('by study of the sacred sources the sacred disciplines are continually re-invigorated; while, on the other hand, speculative theology which fails to make any further examination of the sacred deposit [of faith] turns out, *as we know from experience,* barren and lifeless').

more accurate definition of the truths of faith which the heretics shared with the
[123] whole church, although this, in certain respects, also formed part of our deposit of faith. Thus, as a temporary result of the definition of a dogma, a certain shift of emphasis has frequently taken place, in which certain aspects of the faith have been pushed into the background. Moreover, if the sense of a dogmatic definition is to be evaluated according to its precise content, this must also be viewed in the light of the entire tradition which preceded it and in which the dogma matured to self-expression. It must, however, be admitted that the whole of theology, up to and including biblical theology, can, in one respect, be called a *théologie du magistère,* as the final norm of faith in the interpretation of holy scripture and of every witness of the tradition of the church is the church's teaching authority. But in that case it is a question of a critical authority in the matter of scientific research—a norm which presupposes research and never replaces it.

Finally, it should be noted that theology has, among its positive functions, not only the task of investigating earlier expressions of the life of the church, but also those of today. Examples of such current expressions are the lay institutes and the growing consciousness of the place of the layman as a christian in the world and as a layman in the church, the liturgical movement, and the noticeable swing on the part of the religious life towards the world. All these present-day expressions of the life of the church form a *locus theologicus,* a theological forum, for theological reflection. Wherever a possible witness to the authentic faith is to be found, the theologian can be rightfully employed in his own sphere of work. Positive theology may therefore be defined as *fides-ex-auditu in statu scientiae*—'faith as listened to and heard, but at the level of a discipline'.

[124] *Historical note: Aquinas and positive theology*

It has frequently happened that Aquinas has been falsely interpreted because of his differently orientated terminology. Aquinas was a great theologian above all because of his positive theological output. It was astonishing for his period, especially as he was often unable easily to obtain certain positive works—such as, for example, the commentaries of a father of the church. I have already pointed out in the introduction to this article that it is characteristic of Aquinas that he seldom used the term *theology,* but usually employed the term *sacra doctrina.* And for him, s*acra doctrina* included very much more than pure speculative theology. Every scientific activity that was concerned with 'holy scripture' was, for Aquinas, genuine theology. I have no need to outline here the development of the medieval concept of *sacra doctrina.* This has already been

dealt with in an excellent manner.[49] Holy scripture was really the centre of all theological activity. But the method of dealing with it was always dependent on the new techniques of thought, as these came to be used in the *facultas artium* ('arts faculty'). As the growth of human awareness brought about a renewal of this method, there was at the same time a renewal of the theological method, until finally the aristotelian technique of the *scientia conclusionum* came to be used, when the discursive function of theology was stressed in addition to all the other theological functions. When Aquinas asked the question, 'utrum S. Doctrina sit scientia'[50], what this *quaestio* meant was whether theology, in [125] addition to its many other functions, also possessed a discursive function. His affirmative answer meant that, in addition to the many other *scientific* activities of theology (here taken in the modern sense), theology also had a definite function in which it realised, in accordance with the medieval view, the aristotelian concept of *scientia.* It was very far from Aquinas' mind to define the whole of theology in this answer. He did not see the drawing of conclusions as the most important function of theology (I shall discuss later what he meant by this); for him the most important function was quite simply the *intelligentia fidei,* the understanding of the faith:

> Reason led by the hand of faith develops to the point at which it more fully takes hold of the objects of faith and then in a certain measure understands *them.*[51]

The master in theology was, then, a *magister in S. Pagina,* a biblical theologian par excellence. He was also a patristic theologian, because scripture was studied in the light of the fathers' study of the bible. The church's pronouncements were also studied in this perspective, and *consuetudines Ecclesiae* ('usages of the church') were looked for—these had a normative value for Aquinas. A good example of this broad view of theology can be found in articles 8 to 10 of the *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1[52], in which Aquinas examines the procedures of [126] theological study. It is clear from these articles that the science of theology included—for Aquinas—in addition to the speculative aspect, everything that we should call positive theology. It was only after Aquinas that the division occurred between positive and speculative theology. A relic of this pernicious division still persists in the organisation of programmes of theological study, in which separate courses exist in speculative theology and in the history of

[49] See especially the article referred to above by J. de Ghellinck, and the great works of M. D. Chenu: *La théologie comme science au XIIIe siècle,* Paris, 1957³; *Introduction à l'étude de saint Thomas d'Aquin,* Ottawa and Paris, 1950; *La théologie au XIIe siècle,* Paris, 1957.

[50] Lit. 'whether holy doctrine is a science' *(ST* I, q. 1, a. 1).

[51] 'Ratio manducta per fidem excrescit in hoc ut credibilia plenius comprehendat at tunc ipsa *ipsa* quodammodo intelligat' (*1 Sent.* Prol., q. 1, a. 3, sol. 3).

[52] See also *1 Sent.* Prol., q. 1, a. 5, in which these three articles still form one single article.

dogma. The grave danger inherent in this system is that speculative theology tends to become sterile, while positive theology tends to become pure history.

2. Speculative theology

It will be clear from the preceding section that speculative theology is not a suprastructure of positive theology, but that it attempts to establish the meaning and content of the data supplied by positive theology. In its positive function, theology is seen to be speculative, and in its speculative function it is seen to be at the same time positive. I have already indicated the possibility of reflection about the faith, and shall now deal with this in greater detail.

a. The meaning of the speculative 'intelligentia fidei' according to the First Vatican Council

The First Vatican Council opened up a few discreet perspectives on to the speculative function of theology:

> When reason illuminated by faith searches with diligence, piety, and prudence, it attains—through the gift of God—a certain understanding of the mysteries [of faith], and an abundantly fruitful understanding at that: both from the analogy with what it
[127] knows by natural mysteries with each other and with the final end and purpose of man.[53]

I have included this quotation here in my examination of the functions of speculative theology because it was the intention of the *Acta* of this council, assuming the positive function of theology, to define the speculative function of theology more precisely.[54] The council was compelled by the situation prevailing at the time to define dogmatically in a positive and subtle manner the function of the human intellect in theology. On the one hand, the church was confronted with German semirationalism (Günther especially, but also Hermes and Frohschammer), in which the function of the intellect in the

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[53] DS 3016 (= DR 1796): 'Ratio quidem, fide illustrata, cum sedulo, pie et sobrie quaerit, aliquam Deo dante mysteriorum intelligentiam eamque fructuosissimam assequitur tum ex eorum, quae naturaliter cognoscit, analogia, tum e mysteriorum ipsorum nexu inter se et cum fine hominis ultimo;...'

[54] See the *adnotatio* to the preliminary draft of the definition of the dogma *(CLC* VII, 526): 'fide nimirum supposita inquiritur quomodo veritates in revelatione sint propositae, quae est theologia positiva (ut dici solet); atque inde assumptis etiam veritatibus et principiis naturalibus aliqua analogica intelligentia rerum per revelationem cognitarum deducitur, quid sint in se ipsis: 'fides quaerit intellectum'; haecque est theologia speculativa' ('faith already being presupposed, it is asked how the various truths are propounded in revelation, and this is the so-called "positive" theology; then, these truths in their turn being assumed, and with them the principles of natural knowledge and nature, an analogical understanding of the things known through revelation, of what they are in themselves, is deduced: "faith seeks understanding"; and this is speculative theology'). It was from this text that the definitive dogmatic formulation was elaborated in stages.

intelligentia fidei was exaggerated and faith was rationalised; on the other hand, it was confronted with French fideism (Bautain, Bonald, and de Lammenais), which underestimated the function of the intellect with regard to faith. This [128] situation obliged the council not to limit itself to mere anti-heretical formulations, but constructively and positively to clarify the faith in this question. Bishop Pie of Poitiers officially explained this positive meaning in his *relatio* ('motion'): 'in the second paragraph is set out what is and what is not *the part of reason* in the clarification of supernatural truth'[55], although it must be recognised that, despite its positive content, the definition was in the first place a reaction against the excessive rationalisation of theology (as, for instance, by Günther[56]):

> In order to check the indiscretion of certain men of our own time, who have wished to be wise to a degree that prudence forbids us to be wise,... we solemnly teach and declare...[57]

In the first place, the council pointed out that the subject of theological insight was the *human intellect*—but the intellect in association with faith, *ratio fide illus frata*. A stand was made against Günther with this expression *illustratio fidei,* which corresponds with the *fide supposita* ('faith being presupposed') and the *fide praelucente* ('with faith as a light shining ahead') of the commentaries.[58] This is an implicit recognition that theology is not an act of faith, but a human mode of thought, an intellectual activity, made in the light of and in the closest association with faith. Consequently the addition *Deo dante* ('by the gift of [129] God'), which is not further explained in the *Acta,* should not be formally understood in the sense of a charism—in other words, in the sense of theology being a true charismatic activity. Although such charismatic utterances cannot, *per se,* be excluded, this addition does not allude to a special grace, but to the providential function of theology as reflection on the faith. The work of theology should also be undertaken as a serious scientific work (*sedulo*). Since, however, it is a science of *faith,* the qualifications *pie et sobrie* were inserted, in opposition to the rationalism of Günther. This was also apparently an allusion to Rom. 12:3.[59] The scientific work of theology should therefore be carried out in an atmosphere of religious 'awe' for the mystery, in humility towards the transcendence of the mystery of faith. It should be performed *sobrie,* that is,

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[55] 'In secunda paragrapho exponitur, quales sint et quales non sint *partes rationis* in excolenda veritate supernaturali' (*CLC* VII, 200).
[56] *CLC* VII, 87-8.
[57] 'Ad temeritatem quorundam hominum nostrae aetatis cohibendam, qui voluerunt plus sapers quam oportet ad sobrietatem ... docemus et declaramus...' *(CLC* VII, 509).
[58] *CLC* VII, 526.
[59] *CLC* VII, 509: 'oportet sapere ad sobrietatem' (it is well to know and understand with prudence').

without audacity, as though it were possible to understand the meaning of faith in the same way as it is possible to comprehend the object of purely human thought. For this reason, the following sentence was also included in the definition of the dogma:

> However [reason] is never rendered capable of perceiving these [mysteries of faith] in the same way as it perceives the truths which constitute its proper object.[60]

The task of understanding the meaning and content of revelation is therefore quite different from that of philosophy.

[130] The result of this humble reflection on the faith is that the content of faith is *understood (aliqua intelligentia)* in a very special way, and that this understanding of the faith must be regarded as particularly fruitful *(fructuosissima)* for the life of faith itself. The council summarised the ways in which speculative theology is able to throw some intelligible light on the content of faith under three headings. In the first place, it is able to do this by appealing to natural, human insights—to man's experimental knowledge as made explicit in philosophy. It is clear from the *Acta* that this refers to the *usus philosophiae,* that is, to the use of philosophy in theology.[61] It is typical of the spirit of the theology of those days that only this speculative function was mentioned in the *adnotatio* to the preliminary draft of the dogma[62], without any allusion whatever to the two other functions of speculative theology! These two other functions were not even mentioned in the first proposed *schema* of the dogma.[63] It was only in the eighth session of the commission that Bishop Gasser of Brixen[64] suggested the inclusion of the two other functions:

> ... from the inner coherence by which the truths of revelation are connected with each other, and from the marvellous congruity which connects them with our final destiny.[65]

[131] This important addition, which was accepted, with a few alterations in style, into the definitive dogmatic definition[66], was a fortunate correction to the one-sided theology of Franzelin and Kleutgen who, together with Bishop Conrad Martin of Paderborn and Bishop Deschamps of Malines, had a lion's

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[60] DS 3016 (=DR 1796): 'numquam tamen idonea redditur ad ea perspicienda instar veritatum quae proprium ipsius obiectum constituunt'.
[61] See the *adnotatio* to the preliminary draft of the definition (*CLC* VII, 526): 'humana ratio et philosophia in religionis rebus non dominari sed ancillari omnino debent' ('in matters of religion, human reason and philosophy should assume, not a dominating, but an ancillary, function').
[62] *CLC* VII, 226.
[63] *CLC* VII, 1630.
[64] Mansi 53, V, 191.
[65] *CLC* VII, 1657: 'ex contextu quo veritates revelatae inter se, et ex mirabili congruentia, qua cum fine nostro ultimo connectuntur'.
[66] *CLC* VII, 253.

share in the composition of the dogmatic formula.[67] The second and third, and otherwise closely connected, functions of speculative theology are therefore the intelligible synthesis of the data of faith on the basis of their mutual relationship and at the same time of their religious saving value in the context of the ultimate meaning of human existence.

Before I proceed, on the basis of this solemn definition of faith, to a deeper analysis of the central functions of speculative theology, as a function of the one theological reflection which includes positive theology, I must attempt to analyse more precisely why speculative theology is possible and legitimate—in other words, I must examine the so-called 'analogy'.

b. The basis of the possibility of a speculative theology

The natural and the supernatural form only one order of salvation under the providential guidance of the God of salvation, who created us in order to deify us in the manner of redemption. Nature and, as a result, the whole activity of the human mind are thus included in a supernatural christian order. By the exercise of its own distinctive function, the human mind in activity is already participating in the realisation of man's supernatural destiny. But, because of the unity of the natural and the supernatural, in which human thought is included, the human mind must also play a part in the life of faith itself. It must [132] reflect about faith. On the other hand this 'nature', and thus the human mind, is included in the mystery of the 'supernatural', with the result that the whole of this mental activity within the life of faith fades into mystery and, as it were, disappears behind a cloud, where the intellectual result is deprived of the control of the human eye. In this way, the whole of speculative theology is subject to the constant correction of the divine mystery of salvation. It will also be clear from this that speculative thought should be steeped in *positive* theology, and can therefore only make progress when it is in constant contact with scripture and with the whole tradition of faith. To regard the datum of faith simply as a point of departure for self-sufficient speculation is an essential betrayal of the basic law of reflection about the faith. As P. Kreling insisted again and again throughout the whole of his academic career[68], the most sensitive point of all speculation about the faith is our *sense for the mystery*. I, too, must stress this fundamental law of all thought within the mystery here—in the first place, it is the basic law of all thought about God in general, and subsequently of all thought about the God of salvation.

[67] *CLC* VII, 1646-7.

[68] See his inaugural address: *De aard der heilige godgeleerdheid,* Nijmegen and Utrecht, 1928; and his Valedictory Lecture: 'Beschouwingen rond de theologie', *NKS* 54 (1958), 1-9.

a. *The mystery in our natural thought about God* (analogy). There are no real concepts about God in our natural knowledge of God. We may try to come into contact with something of the divine reality by means of our own creaturely concepts, but their content will always be of a creaturely kind, and as such
[133] cannot be ascribed to God.[69] We possess no idea of God or of any of his attributes that is both positive and can be properly predicated of him. Knowing, I can grasp something of the reality of God, but I cannot conceive it in its divine content, in its reality in God himself. My concept has, as it were, an inner dynamism. It refers, beyond its content, to the divine, which must be in the direction indicated by this concept; but the content of my concept can tell me nothing at all about the specifically divine reality that I do grasp by knowing.[70] I am not saying here that our natural knowledge of God is merely a blind shot in the dark, aimed at a completely unknown reality. God is really situated within the perspective indicated by the intelligible content of the so-called *transcendentalia,* that is, of the reality constituted by *being,* which is our own reality and which does objectively refer us to God. But he cannot be grasped conceptually. It is true that our concepts do objectively refer us noetically (and thus not pragmatically) to God, but it is impossible to situate God more accurately within this perspective—our gaze fades in the cloud of the mystery. The specifically divine manner of being escapes us utterly. It is revelation that makes us know what surprises the specifically divine manner of being, of being good and so on, has in store for our human thought. Revelation enables us to know that God is one and not many, and as believers we are bound to maintain this strict monotheism. But the specifically divine manner of being one eludes
[134] our natural thought, and so revelation surprises us with the fact that this specifically divine manner of being one is nothing less than Trinity! Again, we also have a natural knowledge of the omnipotence of God, but have no conception whatever of the specifically divine manner of this omnipotence. One way in which this was revealed to us was in the impotence of the cross! We also know that God cannot be changeable, but we can only to some extent sense the specifically divine manner of this non-contingency from our experience of the answered prayer of supplication. God's non-contingency remains perfect and undiminished, but the divine manner of its realisation surprises us in so many ways that it cannot and may not be identified with the static unchangeableness of a terrestrial model. The most sensitive point of our real knowledge of God is that we *know* that God is quite different from the reality of which we have knowledge. In this sense, what is specifically God's we know only in conscious

[69] See also J. Pieper, 'L'élément négatif dans la philosophie de S. Thomas d'Aquin', *DV* 20 (1951), 25-49.
[70] See *ST* I, q. 13, a. 4.

unknowing. But this conscious unknowing or negative knowledge of God is nonetheless a true *knowledge* because it is implicit in a positive knowledge, the conscious content of which also objectively applies to God, the one who is totally different, even though we can neither know nor express *the way in which* this applies to God. All this prompts us to exercise great caution in speaking of God and in using philosophical insights in theology, although the use of philosophy in theology is legitimate because of the absolute nucleus contained by human knowledge.

b. *The mystery in our supernatural knowledge of faith.* We experience this aspect of mystery even more powerfully in the concepts of faith, although the *analogia entis* ('analogy of being') still remains the basis of the *analogia fidei* ('analogy of faith'). If our natural knowledge of God in its concepts contains a *natural* [135] openness for the transcendent, this openness is brought about in the concepts of faith by positive revelation. In this case, it is no longer the natural intellect that discloses in the content the objective perspective towards God. God, who reveals himself in a human dimension, gives to our human contents a new dimension which they do not possess of their own accord. Revelation opens up in our conceptual and figurative human knowledge a new objective perspective. This content orientates us, by virtue of revelation, objectively towards the specifically divine manner of being as this reveals itself. In this way, for example, the fatherhood and sonship of God, as an affirmation of faith of the first and the second persons of the Trinity, is really an extension of our human experiential intelligibility, 'father' and 'son'. We cannot, however, grasp conceptually the realisation of this fatherhood and this sonship.

The concepts of faith are therefore not purely negative, nor are they purely metaphors, similes, or non-contradictions (as A. Farrer believed). They really are authentic knowledge, not merely pragmatic or symbolic knowledge. The concepts of faith really have something to do with intelligibility, an intelligibility which, by virtue of revelation, is open to the mystery. The typical, noetic value of our concepts of faith (as an element of our knowledge of faith) is, as it were, to be found in a projective act of the mind in which we reach out for God, without actually grasping him conceptually, in the firm conviction that God really is in the direction towards which we are reaching, e.g, the direction which, thanks to revelation, is objectively indicated by the humanly intelligible content of 'father' and 'son'. The fact that Christ, *totus in suis, totus in nostris* ('whole and entire in his own sphere and in ours') expresses the divine reality [136] of salvation in humanly intelligible terms as 'father' and 'son' guarantees for us the objective and absolute value of the statement: God *is* Father and Son. The *expression* of this objective divine reality is therefore as an expression also unmistakably closely linked to a human content. By virtue of revelation, however, this precisely defined human content has a real and referential value

with regard to what God really is in himself, even though it does not lay hold of this by a concept. The act of the knowledge of faith is thus objective in the manner of an intending act—we do not really apply the purely conceptual content of 'father' and 'son' to God but, *in the direct line of this and of no other conceptual content* (used by revelation), we truly intend the divine reality. God is therefore really Father and Son. This statement has no merely pragmatic value, as though we conceive God only by analogy with the manner in which a father acts towards his son. This would be modernism. On the other hand, however, when we say in faith: 'God is Father, God is Son', this knowledge is not a conceptual grasp of the distinctive manner in which this fatherhood and this sonship is realised in God. This human content is, by virtue of revelation, only an *objectively* noetic reference to the specifically divine manner of being which in any case continues to escape us. It is clear, then, that the classic view of M. Pénido completely by-passes the heart of the matter in reducing the analogous knowledge of faith to the level of 'God bears the same relationship towards his Son as a father bears towards his son'.[71] This does not take us any farther
[137] forward. If the analogy is conceived as a concept that is proportionately one and equally applicable to both human and divine fatherhood, then the characteristic intelligibility of the content of faith is ultimately cancelled out, and is reduced simply to a comparison between two knowns and two unknowns. There is also the question as to whether we can so strip a human intelligibility of its creaturely manner of realisation that any 'content' will still remain that is equally applicable to both God and man!

What is more, this is completely at variance with the most profound inspiration of thomism, which absolutely refuses to apply *(attribuere)* the conceptual content itself to God and prefers to speak of 'intending God' *(intendere Deum)* through the objectively referential value of our conceptual contents.

To conclude, then, the entire objective, true, and speculative value of our concepts of faith resides in their *objective projection*[72] in the direct line or the direction (and in no other line or direction) which is indicated by the content itself of these concepts (which are accessible to us), with the restriction, however, that we have no suitable conception of the specifically divine manner of realisation of this content. The entire argument is based on the view that knowledge implies more than merely 'explicit, conceptual' knowledge.[73] The mystery is preserved, but we have an objective view of it. Both the mystery and

[71] M. Pénido *Le rôle de l'analogie en théologie dogmatique*, Paris, 1931, 258ff.
[72] By this word *objective* I completely dissociate myself from the 'intellectual dynamism' of Maréchal.
[73] D. de Petter's articles on human knowledge are also valuable for the study of theology. See *TP* 1 (1939), pp. 84-105; 2 (1940), 515-50; 11 (1949), 3-26; and 17 (1955), 199-254.

the speculative intelligibility are thus guaranteed, in accordance with the constant demand both of the whole of the tradition of faith and of the church's [138] teaching office. On this basis, both positive and speculative theology are possible. Not only does this establish the possibility of a speculative theology—it also points out the direction in which it must proceed.

c. Theocentric (trinitarian) theology with a christological method

It will at once be apparent from the foregoing that speculative theology is essentially christological with regard to its method, but theocentric with regard to its subject.[74] Revelation, which is the object of theological reflection, is concerned with an *oikonomia,* an economy of salvation, as the revelation of *theologia.* This basic idea can be summarised in the words of Augustine: 'the history of the temporal dispensation of divine providence'.[75] The essential datum of revelation is *a mystērion,* that is, a temporal plan of salvation as the appearance of the eternal, trinitarian mystery of God revealed for the salvation of mankind. To confine theology to the study of the history of salvation is to neglect the aspect of the mystery that is revealed in the history of salvation. On the other hand, to study pure *theologia* is also to neglect the fact that the *theos* only reveals himself to us as God in an *oikonomia.* If we accept, correctly, with Aquinas that the true subject of theology is the living God, the *Deus salutaris* or the *Deus sub ratione Deitatis*—that is, the saving God, God as seen under the aspect of his godhead—(for it is precisely as such that he is our salvation), then it is clear that we shall only be able to reach this living God where he revealed [139] himself as such—in Christ Jesus, who is the public manifestation of God. This at the same time shows that theology which is orientated towards the history of salvation is not opposed to theology which accepts the *ratio Deitatis* ('aspect of godhead') as the principle of theological study and that a theology which, on the other hand, is directed towards the *ratio Deitatis* in everything cannot neglect the history of salvation, in which God manifests himself precisely as God. Just as philosophy cannot reflect about God if it does not take God's creatures as its point of departure and continuously concern itself with these creatures, in which the mystery of God is recognised, so too can theology say nothing about the God of salvation unless it proceeds from and stays close to the history of salvation, in which God affirms himself as God. Yet the philosopher recognises God as a supraterrestrial and suprahistorical transcendent being who is not a function of the world, but a being on whom the world is dependent. Similarly, theology regards God as transcending the

[74] See *ST* I, q. 1, a. 7.
[75] 'Historia dispensationis temporalis divinae providentiae' (*De vera religione* 7 (*PL* 34, 128)).

history of salvation and as leading an intertrinitarian, independent life. Theology can, however, only obtain a view of this life through the plan of salvation, and must therefore constantly rely on the economy of salvation. The more thoroughly theology explores this economy, the more deeply it will penetrate the *ratio Deitatis,* God as God. On the other hand, however, theology should not be identified with knowledge of the temporal order of salvation, for God transcends the history of salvation.

This is something that is often forgotten nowadays. There are deviations here both to the right and to the left, and the central truth is forgotten—*either* that the living God, who is reached by the light of faith, has only expressed
[140] what is capable of being positively known about his being at the level of the historically situated economy of salvation, *or* that the mystery of the history of salvation is only the revelation of a supratemporal mystery of God himself. In the first case, the christological method is neglected. In the second case, what is forgotten is that theology cannot be identified with christology, and that God is greater not only than the human heart, but also than the history of salvation. Is it therefore not typical that, in a recent theological *summa,* which is otherwise, in many respects, very striking[76], there is no genuinely *theological* treatise on God or the Trinity, although it contains all the other normal theological treatises? Theology is undoubtedly concerned with the intelligibility of the living God, and the history of salvation is the only way towards this understanding.[77]

This is why I can hardly accept Y. Congar's solution here, which is to make a distinction between theocentric and christocentric theology, that is, between theology and the christian life itself.[78] According to Congar, theology as a science should consider everything in relation to God and should therefore be theocentric, whereas the christian life should consider everything in relation to Christ and thus be christocentric. This cannot be a true view. It must, on the contrary, be the structure of revelation itself and the life of faith that determine whether theology and the christian life should be theocentric or christocentric. This division between theology and the christian life is all the more disastrous
[141] in view of the fact that theology itself acts as a (human) critical authority in respect of the true orientation of the christian life. It is theology that must determine—although itself subject to the supreme critical authority of the teaching office of the church—whether in the life of the spirit the orientation should be christocentric or theocentric. If the life of the spirit is christocentric, then so is theology: the norm of both is the content of revelation itself! And it is

[76] *Fragen der Theologie heute*, Einsiedeln, 1957.
[77] See *ST* I, q. 2, Prol.: 'Christus qui secundum quod homo, via est nobis tendendi in Deum' ('Inasmuch as Christ is man, he is for us the way by which we strive after God').
[78] See 'Théologie', *DTC* 15-1 (1946), col. 458.

clear from what has gone before that it must be formulated as follows: both the life of the spirit and theology are at once theocentric and (to avoid using the term *christocentric)* christological. The all-important fact is the *manifestatio Dei in Christo,* the revelation of God in Christ—hence a theology based on the history of salvation, and thus on christology. Historically, anyway, it is clear that the basic insights into the trinitarian dogma were gained along the paths of the history of salvation. Belief in the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father was clarified by the patristic consideration of the saving mission of Christ—if Christ is not really God, consubstantial with the Father, we are not redeemed and deified.[79] And when I go on to speak about the symbolum of faith[80], it will be clear that, in scripture, the christological attitude has always been based on the all-embracing orientation towards the mystery of God.

This is of the utmost importance for the conceptual structure of theology. Just as the creaturely enters our natural knowledge of the divine, so also does the christological enter our knowledge of the living God: 'in the [sacred] discipline we use his accomplishment, whether in nature or by *grace,* in place of a definition [of God]'.[81] This christological aspect in our theological concepts is [142] the properly theological index of the analogy of our theological knowledge of the faith. If in general analogy is our knowledge of the one through the other, in theology it is our knowledge of God through Christ. If, for example, we wish to gain a deeper insight into God's perfections—his goodness, his justice, and so on—, then we must, theologically speaking, not in the first place appeal to what philosophy can tell us about God's goodness from a philosophical analysis of the created world, but rather study the history of salvation, about which the bible can tell us and in which God's specifically divine goodness is revealed to us. Philosophical insights may certainly be important in this connection, but they undergo a metamorphosis, since the goodness of God's creation would appear to be also bound up with the theological existential relationship of man towards God, with whom I enter into personal relationship. *He* is the creator, and the world of creation, as the expression of God's goodness, thus acquires a deeper meaning—it becomes the subject of conversation in the personal communion between God and man. Seen from the point of view of man, it is an answer to human questions put to the living God; seen from the point of view of God, it is a task given to man as an extension of his intimacy in grace with God.

It would therefore be wrong to contrast theology on the basis of the history of salvation with so-called 'abstract metaphysical theology'. It would be quite

[79] See, for example, Athanasius, *De synodis* 51 *(PG* 26,783).
[80] See part 2, chapter 8: 'The creed and theology', on pp. [223-39] below.
[81] *ST* I, q. 1, a. 7, ad 1: 'utimur in doctrina...eius effectu vel naturae vel gratiae, loco definitionis'.

wrong to think that, after having taken the *ratio Deitatis in tribus personis* ('the principle of God in three persons') as a dogmatic datum from Denzinger, we
[143] can better understand this fact by making a direct appeal to philosophical ideas, as though philosophy could simply be transferred to this reality which is completely new to philosophy at least in its explicit form and which transcends it. It is only when, after a lengthy study of the history of revelation and the tradition of the church, an initial synthesis is, as it were, objectively forced upon us, that philosophy can provide us with insights that will bring the doctrine of the Trinity into harmony in our thought with monotheism. Metaphysics can, of course, help us in this, since this science of reality in general regards God as being, *sub ratione entis* ('under the aspect of being') and the *ratio Deitatis* ('the aspect of godhead', of God as God) which is considered by theology is nothing other than God's proper being. No division can therefore exist between the two, as though the *Deitas* were a kind of super-mystery in relation to the mystery of God with which philosophy is concerned. Theology which is based on the history of salvation also contains naturally metaphysical elements.

With this in mind, we can now look more closely at certain functions of speculative theology, as outlined by the First Vatican Council.

d. Some of the main functions of speculative theology

(1) A deeper knowledge of faith through the search for the mutual connection between the mysteries of faith (*ex nexu mysteriorum inter se*)

The provision of a scientific synthesis of what is offered by a broadly based positive theology is regarded as the most important function of speculative
[144] theology. Although the entire temporal order of salvation is grounded in the free initiative of God's grace, in which natural determinism plays no part, this should not prevent the theologian from seeking an intelligible connection between the mysteries of faith. Although God's free will has no cause, he has nonetheless established an organic and structural connection in all that he has freely brought about.[82] The history of salvation and the content of revelation from a single whole, in which the one fact of salvation or the one truth of faith is based on another datum, with the result that the mutual connection of these mysteries of salvation and their synthesis provide us with a deeper insight into revelation. Originally, it was precisely this function of theology which led to the question of the theological conclusion.

[82] See *ST* I, q. 19, a. 5: 'non propter hoc Deus vult hoc, sed vult hoc esse propter hoc' ('it is not that because of one thing God wills another, but rather that he wills one thing to be because of another').

(i) *A historical outline of the problem of the theological conclusion.* It is clear from the history of the church that this problem was seen in a different light in the patristic and the earlier scholastic periods from that in which it was seen in the later scholastic period. Although neither the church fathers nor Aquinas used the technical term *conclusio theologica,* they were certainly familiar with the idea, if in a somewhat different sense from that which it had in the later scholastic period. The *conclusiones fidei* (a term which was used by Aquinas) were for them first and foremost the *truths of faith* into which a deeper insight had been gained because of their connection with other truths of faith. The task of demonstrating the mutual connection between various truths of faith came within the scope of what Aquinas called the *modus argumentativus.*[83] This was [145]
the discursive function of theology, and the example that Aquinas always used in this context was that of our resurrection as illustrated by the resurrection of Christ himself. This discursive function of Aquinas was not, however, a pure deduction. He was very well aware of the fact that, when various data of faith are mysteries, their mutual connection also merges into the mystery. Since, however, the mystery is not 'nonsense', but intelligible in faith, it is possible to indicate certain intelligible connections and thus to achieve a speculative synthesis. The central point of this connection does, however, merge again and again into the mystery, so that purely logical arguments are not decisive in this case. It was because of this mystery aspect that Aquinas preferred to speak of arguments of convenience. It was only when it was a question of the *praeambula fidei* that there was a clearer and more decisive insight into the intelligible connection. The argument of congruence, on the other hand, points both to the presence of intelligible connections and to the mystery that surrounds these connections. The whole of the *conclusio theologica* in the sense which Aquinas gave to it is connected with his doctrine of the *articulus fidei*:

> The objects of faith in the christian faith are said to be distinguished into articles (*articulos*), inasmuch as parts are divided off which have a certain *mutual harmony and coherence*.[84]

According to Aquinas, the object of faith is not in the first place a number of [146]
truths, but the *Veritas prima* [*salutaris*]—the single, saving Truth par excellence. But this *Veritas prima,* as it is known to us in faith (and, it should be added, as it is manifested in a history of salvation), is, as it were, made plural in various judgements of faith.[85] These, however, form a single organic whole, in which

[83] See especially *ST* I, q. 1, a. 8; *Quodl. 4,* q. 9, a. 3.
[84] *ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 6: 'credibilia fidei christianae dicuntur per articulos distingui, in quantum ut partes dividuntur, habentes aliquam coaptationem ad invicem'
[85] See *Verit.,* q. 14, a. 12: 'Plurificatur per diversa enuntiabilia' ('it is made plural in the various objects of proclamation').

some cardinal points act as joints by means of which the whole functions as a harmoniously connected entity. In this way, the content of revelation formed, in Aquinas' view, a single whole of mutually connected truths of faith, the synthesis of which reflects, at the human level, the single truth of salvation as this exists in the 'knowledge of God and of the saints'. Aquinas called the search for the objective implication of the one mystery of faith in the other, one of the most fruitful tasks of theological thought. Because of the structure of the aristotelian concept of *scientia* (the scientific nature of which consists in the establishing of intelligible connections), he also called theology in this respect a *scientia,* at least insofar as this discursive thought takes place in close association with faith.[86] The truth of faith which throws light on another truth was in this context known as a *principium,* and the truth of faith that was clarified in this way was called a *conclusio.* If we do not wish to place too much emphasis on the technical aristotelian manner in which this central theological activity is carried out, it must be said that the essence of theology as practised by the great fathers
[147] of the church is to be found here—the search for the inner connection between the mysteries of faith.

It can, however, happen that other connections are brought to light by this intelligible interpretation which turns out to be pure *theologoumena.* These are the insights which were later given the name of 'strictly theological conclusions'. Aquinas did not deny the possibility, and even the factual existence, of these conclusions. Several can be found, in his christology especially. But an analysis of the articles in which he systematically explains the theological method shows that such conclusions are, in his view, peripheral rather than central to theological reflection. This is also clear from the part played in this matter by Aquinas' doctrine of the *articulus fidei*.[87] A suggestive text is for example:

> Faith is clarificatory of something else insofar as one article [of faith] clarifies another, as the resurrection of Christ does the future resurrection.[88]

In the first place, however, the famous text in the *Summa* should be read in this context. In this text Aquinas quotes the same example:

> This discipline does not adduce proof to demonstrate its foundations which are the articles of faith; but it proceeds from them to demonstrate something else.[89]

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[86] This is the full import of *ST* I, q. 1, a. 2, in which the *scientia* aspect of theology is based on its subordination *(subordinatio)* to faith.

[87] A good study of the 'article of faith' in Aquinas can be found in: J. Parent, *La notion du dogme au XIIIe siècle,* Ottawa 1932; see also A. Lang, 'Die Gliederung und Reichweite des Glaubens nach Thomas von Aquin und den Thomisten', *DTP* 20(1942), pp. 207-36, 335-46; 21(1943), 79-97.

[88] *3 Sent.*, d. 23, q. 2, a. 1, ad 4: 'fides est manifestativa alterius ... in quantum unus articulus manifestat alium, sicut resurrectio Christi resurrectionem futuram'.

Not all the truths of faith, it should be noted in passing, are 'articles of faith' for Aquinas, but only the essential truths of faith. And the 'something else' to be demonstrated is not primarily the strictly theological conclusion, but rather another truth of faith on which an article of faith throws light: [148]

> As the apostle argues from the resurrection of Christ to demonstrate the resurrection of the faithful.[90]

Aquinas is not here raising the question of the so-called 'virtually revealed', although the possibility is not denied that one is thus taken outside the sphere of faith. Summing up, he says:

> Faith is clarificatory of something else, *either* insofar as one article (of faith) clarifies another (article), as the resurrection..., *or* insofar as other particular conclusions are derived theologically from the articles themselves.[91]

And even these 'other particular conclusions' are not in themselves strictly theological conclusions, since there are also, in Aquinas'view, truths of faith which are not articles of faith. It is only on the periphery of Aquinas' theological activity that the so-called 'strictly theological conclusions' appear.

When, therefore, he calls theology a *habitus conclusionum ex principiis*[92], a drawing of conclusions from premisses, it is important to bear two things in mind. First, Aquinas aimed to define theology only according to one function. [149] And secondly, he saw this discursive function as an illumination of the mutual connection between the truths of faith. It was only in the fourteenth century that the *conclusio theologica* properly so called made its appearance, establishing a sharp distinction between, on the one hand, a conclusion drawn from two premisses of faith, and, on the other, the strict 'theological conclusion' drawn from a premiss of faith and a premiss of natural reason. At this same period discursive thought was seen as the basic and central method of theology, and we know from Guillaume Durand (d. 1334) that this was already considered the current opinion in his day:

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[89] *ST* I, q. 1, a. 8: 'haec doctrina non argumentatur ad sua principia probanda quae sunt articuli fidei; sed ex eis procedit ad aliquid aliud ostendenum'.
[90] *ST* I, q, 1, a. 8: 'sicut apostolus ex resurrectione Christi argumentatur ad resurrectionem communem probandam'.
[91] *3 Sent.,* d. 23, q. 2, a. 1, ad 4: 'fides est manifestativa alterius sive in quantum unus articulus manifestat [alium], sicut resurrectio..., sive in quantum ex ipsis articulis quaedam alia in theologia syllogizantur'.
[92] *3 Sent.,* d. 25, q. 2, a. 1, ad 4; *ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 5, ad 2. See also *ST* I, q. 1, a. 2.

> In the third place theology is generally, though I do not know whether truly, understood as the drawing of these [conclusions], and *at the present time* this sense is in general use in conversation.[93]

Later the strictly theological conclusion was raised to the level of the real object of theology, and this development was completed in the seventeenth century. Suarez and John of St Thomas initiated this breach with patristic and earlier scholastic thought. The older view of speculative theology, which had as its main task the scientific formulation of the synthesis of faith, was thrust
[150] completely into the background. Theology became centrifugal in respect of faith, placing itself in its manner of thought outside faith instead of within it, instead of thinking the faith itself. This divergence on the part of later scholasticism contributed a great deal to the depreciation of speculative theology. What had been no more than peripheral to patristic and earlier scholastic theology was raised to the level of the essential activity of theological science.

(ii) *The discursive function in theology.* This brief outline has already provided us with a certain insight into the discursive function of theology. This function must now be considered rather more closely, in view of the opinion expressed by some theologians that, according to Aquinas, there is no place for human thought in theology: 'la raison est une etrangère en doctrine sacrée'.[94] In the book mentioned earlier in this chapter (see p. [115] above), L. Charlier threw doubt on the value of the theological conclusion, and thus on the legitimacy of establishing intelligible connections between the mysteries of faith, basing his opinion on the fact that a theological syllogism always employs four terms. The so-called middle term functions as a term of faith in one of the premisses and as an intellectual term in the intellectual premiss. On the one hand, the mystery undoubtedly possesses an aspect of intelligibility—which is precisely what is accepted into the syllogism—but, on the other hand, this aspect of intelligibility in the premiss of faith is only an *aspect,* which is lost in the mystery. We can therefore never know a priori whether the theological conclusion— even
[151] though it may be quite legitimately drawn according to the laws of the syllogism—is really in accordance with reality. This, then, is Charlier's thesis. Most authors seem, in their criticisms of this thesis, to be rather impressed by

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[93] '... tertio acciptur theologia communius, nescio si verius, pro habitu eorum et hic modus nunc vertitur communiter in ore loquentium.' See A. Lang, 'Die conclusio theologica in der Problemstellung der Spätscholastik', *DTF* 22 (1944). See also A. Lang, 'Das Problem der theologischen Konklusion bei M. Cano und D. Bañez', *DTF* 21 (1943), 87-9; V. Heynck, 'Die Beurteilung der Conclusio theologica bei den Franziskaner Theologen des Trienter Konzils', *FS* 34 (1952), 146-205 (with bibliography on p. 147 *n.* 3 and p. 107 *n.* 54).

[94] 'Reason is an alien in sacred theology' (J. Bonnefoy, *La nature de la théologie selon saint Thomas d'Aquin,* Paris and Bruges, 1939, 57).

this reasoning. Even if the legitimacy of the theological conclusion is accepted, it is still necessary, they think, to introduce certain shades of meaning. First, the intellectual premiss must be verified against the whole tradition of faith. Secondly, the theological conclusion can only be regarded as valid if it is confronted with the whole tradition of faith. Only then can we have absolute certainty.

All this points to the fact that we have to do here with a deeper problem of a fundamental and general nature. This problem is above all concerned with the value and meaning of the syllogism itself—in other words, with the epistemological meaning of reasoning. Purely logical deductive thought is only applicable to formal sciences, such as mathematics, the initial data of which man himself clearly and exhaustively defines, with the result that no surprises are able to occur in the logical and consistent reasoning that follows. This is, however, not applicable to the 'real sciences'—that is, to those sciences which are concerned with the mystery of reality. This reality, both at the natural and at the supernatural level, cannot be completely understood in terms of conceptualism. Any study of the value of discursive thought in theology must therefore be preceded by a study of the discursive aspect of human knowledge itself. If this is done, it becomes immediately apparent how easily reasoning as a *psychological* activity of the mind is confused with the structure of *logical* relationships in a syllogism. The syllogism itself is, in other words, raised to the level of a psychological activity, when in fact it only acts as a logical check on reasoning as a psychological activity. Human knowledge comes into contact [152] with reality only in and through a knowledge in which experience and conceptuality form a unity. If the concept is isolated from experience, then one is excluded by the fact itself from reality. From the psychological point of view, reasoning is the evolutive element in man's experiential knowledge, but only as controlled by the *object* (and not by subjective factors). In this sense, the so-called *simplex apprehensio* (lit. 'simple apprehension') and the *iudicium* (lit. 'judgement') are only logical aspects of a single psychological event which we call 'evolving experimental knowledge', a knowledge which is always to some extent expressed in concepts. Concept and experience therefore belong essentially to each other— the concept is experience itself in its explicit aspect. Newman correctly called this growing experience an 'implicit reasoning'—a gradual development towards the expression of what had been present from the very beginning in experience, although implicit and unnoticed. Explicit reasoning reviews the noetic structures that are contained in implicit reasoning or in evolving experiential knowledge (which is also never completely without concepts). It is precisely these structures that are accepted into the syllogism. The confusion, however, arises from the belief that the exclusive point of departure of the real reasoning is the concept as such, as this is, for example,

accepted into the major premiss. But the point of departure is, on the contrary, experience *in unity with* an initial conceptual expression. The syllogism itself has no psychological value. It only acts as a check on the explicit aspect of the various stages of evolving experiential knowledge. It is simply a logical proof of the correctness of the theory—we are not able to find anything from it for the
[153] first time, but only to check logically what has already been found. This accounts for the difficulty experienced, for example, by students who have to put something that they have not really understood themselves 'in a syllogism'! The syllogism is, so to speak, a logical precipitation from experiential knowledge. The conceptual aspect is therefore of its very nature an aspect of a much richer whole. If we were to confine ourselves purely to logical reasoning about a reality from its conceptual content, we should never be able to tell where we stood, however logically the argument was constructed—in such a case, all contact with the reality would have been lost beforehand. How, then, can the conclusion tell us anything at all about that reality? It is clear, therefore, that the real value of reasoning can only be found in experiential knowledge together with its conceptual expression, and not in the concepts on their own, divorced from human experience.

If this is borne in mind, theological reasoning can be seen in a totally different and a more real light—as an essential factor in the renewal and advancement of theology. The theological syllogism itself is only the logical control of the growth of genuine theological reasoning from an earlier implicit stage of faith. Psychologically, there is a unity here between the life of faith and man's experiential knowledge (in which both faith and intellect play a part), a process of growth that is controlled by the mystery of salvation. This growing experience and the reflection on it throw light on aspects which were previously only implicitly present in this experience. A logically intelligible connection between the expression of this experience in its first stage and its expression in its last stage can in many cases be seen intellectually, but that this connection is ultimately convincing must be attributed to the experience that
[154] underlies the concepts. If this experience is ignored and we only consider two explicit concepts, then we can never be sure where the comparison will lead us—or, to put it more precisely, we cannot know whether the logical connection that we see tells us anything real about the *reality*! Once more we find that speculative theology must at the same time be positive theology, if it aims to pronounce judgements that are concerned with reality. In some cases, the theological syllogism (this is really a contradiction— we can only properly speak of a *logical* syllogism!) is, as Newman said, only a later schematic arrangement in conceptual terms of the growth of the consciousness of faith. (In such cases, we are confronted with the fact that 'theological conclusions' are defined as dogmas, although not because they are conclusions to syllogisms.) In

other cases, the theological syllogism is a projected schematic arrangement, a provisional theme that serves as a working hypothesis which, as history shows, frequently plays an essential part in the development of dogma, but in other cases turns out to be unfruitful and wrong. To put this more precisely, the already formulated theological conclusion is, in some cases, the expression of a still tentative stage of an experience of faith which is striving to express itself more fully. We do not know whether the conclusion is in accordance with reality, and we are, in this sense, ahead of experience! This 'working hypothesis' is valuable on the one hand in that, and insofar as, it is suggested by a real aspect of the content of revelation, and on the other hand in that it focuses vital attention on the data of the sources and of the tradition of faith. This further study, especially of the implicit tendencies of the tradition of faith in the bible, the patristic period, and later stages, can increase our certainty of the correctness of the conclusion until the conclusion can eventually express the [155] experience of faith. This is the enormous part which theological thought plays in the development of dogma. It is only by studying in concrete the development of a particular dogma that a clear understanding can be gained of the full scope of what has been outlined above, and there is ample material for such a study.

(iii) *The theological system and theological systems.* Scientific study implies unity and synthesis. In the science of theology, the many different partial insights develop into a single all-embracing fundamental view from which the whole content of revelation can be surveyed. The search for the mutual connection between the mysteries of faith eventually gives rise to a theological system. It is clear, then, that the value of a theological system should not be measured, at least primarily, by the excellence of the philosophy used in it, but by the fact that the theological synthesis succeeds or does not succeed in giving a place to all the traditional data that are investigated. On the other hand, however, it is also clear that every theological system will remain incomplete and capable of perfection because revelation is inexhaustible. Although supernatural truth, like every truth, is absolute and unchangeable, it still shares, insofar as it is known by us in faith, in human imperfection and thus in the evolutive character of every human possession of truth. Even though every such possession of truth is adequately true (that is, it is not simultaneously true and not-true), this adequately true possession is not exhaustive. Every insight is therefore capable of growth and amplification. Light can be thrown on the same datum from many different sides and it can be approached from various directions, with the result that different and complementary, but correct views [156] of the same question are always possible. Typical examples of this are the synoptic, the johannine, and the pauline views of the figure of Christ that I have already mentioned, the later Alexandrian and Antiochian christologies, and

finally the thomist and the scotist views. The difference in value between the biblical and the theological views is, of course, that all the elements of the various biblical christologies are correct, whereas this cannot be claimed a priori in the case of the various theological views of the figure of Christ. Leaving aside what is really mistaken, it is nonetheless clear that there is in the Antiochian and the scotist school of thought an authentic christological datum which is not expressed in so many words in the Alexandrian and the thomist school of thought. Every theological system is therefore essentially imperfect, incomplete, capable of further inner growth, and in need of amplification from other systems. This does not, however, mean that all theological systems are equal in value. What it does mean is that the excellence of one system as against another is also dependent on whether in its own inspiration, methods, and basic principles it is especially *open* to inner growth and amplification. The capacity of a given theological system to assimilate, to absorb new insights, not in an eclectic, but in a truly harmonious, manner, and thus to live and grow itself, is undoubtedly the best proof of its superiority. To claim that all systems are equal in value would be tantamount to affirming a pure relativism of human knowledge. However excellent a system may be, it should never be forgotten that a system is not concerned with the system itself, but with *reality.*
[157] The system, as a system, is always the defective expression of this reality. In itself the system has no value: to affirm that it did would be tantamount to making the system, to making theology itself, the object of theology, instead of the mystery of salvation. To practise theology through, for example, Aquinas, that is, to allow oneself to be initiated into the mystery of salvation in and through the thomist system, naturally presupposes a historically-faithful exegesis of Aquinas' works. This is, however, not theology, but only textual exegesis of the work of a theologian, however eminent he may be. The practice of theology through Aquinas, however, means a *syntheologein* (lit. 'to practise theology along with'), a struggle for the reality of revelation itself conducted together with Aquinas. This is precisely why all authentic positive theology is at the same time also speculative theology.

It is from the inner growth of a theological system and of theology itself that the differences between various schools of thought can be gradually brought together, through the openness of a given system, to form a higher view. At the same time, opinions will again differ on certain points, and new schools of thought and systems may result from this. This is an inherent characteristic of the imperfection of all human knowledge at any period of human consciousness.

(2) 'Ex eorum, quae naturaliter cognoscit, analogia' ('by analogy from the things which reason knows by natural means'): a deeper insight into the intelligibility of the separate truths of faith

The search for the mutual connection between the truths of faith necessarily includes another theological function, that of the *determinatio fidei*—the more precise definition of the intelligibility or the content of a particular datum of faith. I have already stated the principles of this function in the section dealing [158] with the analogy of faith. It is obvious, for example, that, by appealing to the anthropological structure of man, who is in the world as a spirit through his own corporeality, theology can throw light on the sacraments. It will also be clear that philosophical anthropology, guided by faith, can play an important part in illuminating not only the sacraments but also eschatology. A correct philosophical insight into the unity—and, in a certain sense, also the duality—of the human spirit and body must clearly be of inestimable value in throwing intelligible light on the content and meaning of hell, purgatory, heaven, resurrection, and so on, in the context of man's ultimate end and the definitive redemption of his soul and body. The same applies to the clarification of the mystery of Christ, the fact of God's personal appearance among us as man. Such insights, the result of human experience and made explicit in philosophy, are indispensable to the task of throwing a sure and safe light on this mystery, especially if we are, in our expression of the mystery, to avoid a tendency towards a kind of monophysitism or nestorianism—deviations which not only affect the orthodoxy of the correctness of the speculative expression of the mystery of Christ, but also unconsciously harm and distort our personal contact with Christ. This function also includes (but should not be identified with) the task of demonstrating that the content of faith does not contradict intellectual insights. Thus, speculative theology may, for example, not only demonstrate that the dogma of transubstantiation is not contradictory to philosophical insights into the nature of the physical, but also place the essence of this dogmatic fact in the proper perspective with the aid of philosophical insights.

This activity of speculative theology finally also leads to a renewal of a [159] growth in our manner of representing the concepts of faith. This does not mean that the concepts themselves are changed in this process, which would imply a false appreciation of the objectivity of human knowledge, an acceptance of pure relativism. It is not truth which changes and not even the conceptual aspect of our knowledge of the truth, but the perspective from which man views reality through concepts in the course of history. Our possession of the truth and our concepts thus *grow* from within. Older concepts continue, therefore, to be true, so long as they were previously correct, even though they may have been inadequate. Inwardly enriched, they survive in the newer concepts of faith. If

this were not so, our conceptual knowledge (as an aspect of the whole of knowledge) would have only a pragmatic, relative value, which would a priori deprive also our modern concepts of faith of their serious meaning. The truth contained in the older concepts of faith and theology will therefore find a place among the many shades of meaning contained in the newer concepts of faith and theology.

The church certainly prefers to adhere to the concepts of faith that have already emerged in the church and have even been sanctioned by centuries of use within the church, and it has good reasons for doing so. In the Middle Ages, for example, on the occasion of the rise of progressism, which appealed to aristotelian and Arabian philosophy in order to explain the faith, Pope Gregory IX (1228) expressed his concern as to whether reason was not thereby given too
[160] great a place in theology.[95] In different circumstances, but with the same concern for the soundness of the faith, Pius XII reacted in *Humani Generis* against the tendency to minimise the value of human thought in theology. Human reasoning, which was in the first case, because of its newness, the cause of unrest in the church, became in the second the element which the teaching authority of the church attempted to safeguard. There is no question of ambiguity or opportunism here. The inhibiting influence of the church's teaching authority is not prompted by the conviction that the traditional concepts are in themselves the best but by considerations of safety, or, in certain cases, by the justifiable belief that the theologians in question are going too far and thus endangering the purity of the faith. To handle dogma in a dilettantish fashion is not only 'extreme imprudence' and unworthy of theology—it also means that it becomes 'no more than a reed shaken by the wind'.[96] Aquinas too wrote in the same spirit:

> Concerning divine matters a man should not readily speak otherwise than holy scripture speaks.[97]

The church therefore shows great prudence in preferring to adhere to concepts that have gained a firm meaning through centuries of use within the church and in being chary of as yet untried modern, existential ideas, since the fashionable attitude of being modern is a human psychological characteristic which has no place in the serious study of the faith.

On the other hand, it would be equally unjust to interpret this somewhat inhibiting influence of the church as a damper in theological progress. Pope
[161] Pius XII expressed his surprise in a speech that certain theologians had

[95] See *De terminologia et traditione theologica servanda* (DS 824=DR 442).
[96] 'Ipsum dogma facit quasi arundinem vento agitatam' *(Humani Generis,* DR 3015 [omitted in DS]).
[97] *CEG* I: 'de divinis non de facili debet homo aliter loqui quam S. Scriptura loquatur'.

interpreted *Humani Generis* in this sense. The encyclical itself pointed to the possibility of and the need for a perfecting and refining of the traditional concepts[98], and added that theologians had nothing to fear if they simply attempted to adapt the church's teaching and methods to present-day conditions and needs[99]:

> Let them make a very exhaustive investigation into the questions which contemporary culture and the spirit of the times have brought into the open, though with that prudence and caution which is fitting.[100]

This is in any case objectively demanded of every science, and a fortiori when that science is concerned with the word of revelation of the living God. Such tactless handling of the data of faith is all the more embarrassing, in that it brings genuine attempts at renewal into disrepute, and constant renewal is an inner demand of the life of faith itself. As I have already said, the true illuminating principle, the *lumen quo,* of theology is to be found in the unity of the light of faith and that of the human mind. To express this in concrete terms, it is to be found in the effective contact between the mind of faith and the spirit of the age. As a *believer* in the content of revelation as kept alive in the tradition [162] of the church, the theologian is essentially tied to this tradition. As a believing *man,* however, he is aware of the spirit of the age in which he is living, and he must be thoroughly familiar with this spirit, not only so as to be able to recognise the symptoms of disease that are present in it, but also so as to see 'that an element of truth sometimes lurks hidden in the lies and falsehoods themselves'.[101] In addition to this, God's salvation is addressed to all men, including those who are living today, even though it comes to them via the medium of the history of Israel's salvation and the man Jesus. This divine address must again and again be related to the contemporary situation in which man here and now hears the word of God and in which he has to embody this word into his life and thought. It is precisely this constantly renewed assimilation of faith, prepared by a growth in theology, that causes faith to grow and dogma to develop. Any neglect of the growth and renewal of theology is therefore ipso facto an offence against the life of faith itself. If theology is not subject to continuous renewal in this way, the intellectual

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[98] *Humani Generis,* DS 3883 (=DR 3011): 'vocabula ... ab ipsius Ecclesiae Magisterio adhibita perfici et perpoliri posse' ('the designations used by the magisterium of the church itself are open to a process of perfecting and refining').
[99] *Humani Generis,* DS 3880-81 (=DR 3008-09).
[100] *Humani Generis,* AAS 42 (1950), 578 (from the conclusion, omitted by both DS and DR): 'in quaestiones novas, quas hodierna cultura ac progrediens aetas in medium protulerunt, diligentissimam suam conferant pervestigationem, sed ea qua est prudentia et cautela'.
[101] *Humani Generis,* DS 3879 (=DR 3008): 'quia nonnumquam in falsis ipsis commentis aliquid veritatis latet'.

believer especially tends to feel that the life of faith, with its consequently undeveloped concepts, is not in accordance with his own views of life. As a result, it often happens that even a deeply christian intellectual unconsciously accepts the doctrine of 'double truth'. Such christians, because of their evolved and contemporary consciousness, no longer feel at home with a synthesis of faith which is presented in a conceptual framework which is alien to them and which bears traces of a past civilisation. Some even give up their faith because of this. As soon as attempts are made, however, to renew theology with
[163] prudence and with scientific precision, and the results of these attempts begin to emerge, the church herself at once becomes more open in her appraisal. Thus, the same pope, Gregory IX, who issued a grave warning to the magisters of Paris in 1228 was already much milder in 1231 in his judgement of the 'aristotelian modernism' of the time.

Theologians have therefore to be the 'antennae' with which the church feels modern thought, so as to assimilate those elements of it that can be used and to reject what cannot.[102] The theologian is called to stand at a dangerous crossing of the roads—at the point where faith comes into contact with modern thought and the whole of the new philosophical situation, but where no synthesis has as yet been achieved. It is he who is expected to provide this synthesis. Living theology is therefore always a step ahead of the official theology of the church and ventures along paths where it is still unprotected by the church's teaching authority. (Three-quarters of Aquinas ' teaching on the sacraments was, for example, pre-dogmatic, and his theology on this point formed the preparatory work for the later sacramental dogmas.) In this sense, theologians are by definition the progressive factors in the life of faith and the thought of the church. They are the catalysts, since, as Aquinas himself has said, nothing is so paralysing as habitual thought which makes us adhere firmly to traditional views that, on critical analysis, frequently turn out to be false views.[103] This is
[164] particularly true of thought based purely on a system. A condition of the development of personal insight is a living contact with tradition, not in order to undergo it passively, but to re-create it and to verify it against the present-day experience of life and personal reflection on it. As Husserl has correctly observed, acquired traditions as such are 'dead'; they are deposited as a sediment, and come to life only when that to which they originally bore

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[102] *Humani Generis,* DR 3021 (omitted in DS): 'ne adeptam veritatem amittat, vel corrumpat' ('lest he [i.e, the Christian theologian or philosopher] lose the truth already arrived at, or corrupt it').

[103] *SCG* I, 11: 'Consuetudo autem, et praecipue quae est a puero, vim naturae obtinet; ex quo contingit ut ea quibus a pueritia animus imbuitur, ita firmiter teneat ac si essent naturaliter et per se nota' ('But habit, and especially habit acquired in childhood, has all the force of nature. For this reason, what the mind is steeped in from childhood it holds on to as firmly as if it were something known naturally and self-evidently').

witness and which brought about the existence of a particular science is reactivated.[104] In other words, personal insight is something inherited, but meant to *make* itself tradition by giving a living and continuously progressive meaning to the reality with which it is confronted. Within the sphere of thought about the faith, this is equally true of theology. It is because many theologians are apprehensive about the particular risks inherent in this active task that they tend to withdraw into a purely 'positive' theology and thereby escape these risks—and with them, the theologian's special responsibility! In this way, they restrict themselves to repeating in their reflection what others have thought about previously, and thus fail in the task of thinking about the faith themselves, to the profit of the life of faith today and in the future. It is only when theologians living in the present themselves think about the faith and thus really practise theology—always on the basis of a positive study—that theology can ever be an important religious and social factor in human life [165] today and in the future, The answers given by theology and inspired by revelation are at the same time conditioned by the mental and social situation of mankind. Secular, economic, social, and political structural reforms, scientific, biological, and psychological advances, and progress in depth psychology and medicine, together with new philosophical insights—all these have presented the life of faith with new problems and have frequently caused theology to arrive at different solutions from those arrived at in the past. (Think, for example, in the light of the fundamentally different economic structures of today, of Aquinas' views on charging interest on loans—a practice which, at the time of Aquinas, was regarded as sinful usury.) Sometimes it can even happen that this human progress results in theology accepting the view that those principles which previously inspired the solution to a problem themselves presupposed a human situation that had survived from the past and is no longer valid. In this way, the developed human situation can lead to a purer statement of these principles. This shows clearly enough that an intense presence-in-the-world is a necessary condition for theology, if it is to avoid becoming a discipline that is practised in an enclave and has no effect whatever on the religious life and on the lives of men. If theology loses sight of all these factors, it will almost inevitably sink to the level of bewildering theological presumption, which in turn can easily develop into genuine theological pride. When this happens, what is relative is regarded as absolute, and the theologian behaves as though he possessed supreme power over truth. In these circumstances, he often falls a prey to a certain supernaturalism and becomes

[104] 'This entire continuity is a unity of the making of a tradition up to the present time, which is itself making tradition' (E. Husserl, 'Die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Geometrie als intentional-historisches Problem', *RIP* 1 [1939], 220).

[166] inclined to simplification. He tends to overlook the structure of secondary causes and will, for example, deal in a purely 'theological' manner with the problems and difficulties of prayer, yet fail to appreciate the psychological factors, in which the crux of the problem is frequently to be found. What is absolute in the faith can sometimes deteriorate into a personal absoluteness. This almost automatically leads to heresy-hunting, in which the theologian who humbly listens to the word of God wherever it is to be found is bound to suffer. For the same reason, such 'absolute' theologians are often only half acquainted with the teaching of other schools of theology and have frequently gained this half-knowledge only from works of secondary importance. This teaching is then presented by them in such a way that no one can understand how it was possible for any serious person to propagate such theories. Or they talk, for example, about hell, heaven, and purgatory, and even about numerous 'limbos', as if they had in fact visited them, and are thus able to describe them in all their memorable detail. Every scientist is exposed to the danger of falling a victim to these vices, but the theologian is especially prone to it, because his science, theology, in its aspect of wisdom, has as the object of its study the ultimate meaning of human life, God himself.

It follows, then, that speculative theology may not be identified with scholastic theology, which is only one historical form in which speculative thought about the faith has appeared. Not infrequently manuals are published with the title *Theologia speculativa seu scholastica* ('Speculative, or scholastic, theology'), which is of course clearly incorrect. From this it would seem that Athanasius was not a speculative theologian! One tragic result of this confusion
[167] of speculative and scholastic theology is also that, if scholastic philosophy, rightly or wrongly, does not appeal very much to an intending theologian, he must ipso facto turn his back on speculative theology and practise only positive theology. As a consequence, he will only study the glories of the past, and have no concern for what is to make the faith glorious in the future.

On the other hand, however, the church has testified, at least as far as education in schools is concerned, to her preference for the scholastic speculative synthesis as expressed especially in the works of Aquinas. The reason for this is that it is precisely here that faith and thought were synthesised—though only in accordance with the possibilities of that particular period of history —with remarkable harmony within the delicate fabric of the mystery of faith.[105]

[105] For the true, not subjectively interpreted, meaning of the papal recommendations of the 'thomism of Thomas', see the outstanding critical work of F. G. Martinez, *De l'authenticité d'une philosophie à l'intérieur de la pensée chrétienne,* Madrid, 1955.

What the canonical obligation to thomism (according to *CIC* 1360, § 2) precisely implies was explained in an authentic and clear manner by Pope Pius XII in his address delivered on the occasion of the fourth centenary of the Gregorian University.[106] According to this official explanation, no more should be inferred from this canon than the church intended it to say, namely, the acceptance of the *praeambula fidei* (neither more nor less) as these have been accepted by the church from the very beginning and as they have been brilliantly synthesised by Aquinas. For the rest, the church allows theologians and philosophers complete freedom.

(3) 'Ex mysteriorum nexu ... cum fine hominis ultimo' ('from the connection of the mysteries with the ultimate destiny of man'): theological intelligibility from the saving value of the content of revelation [168]

God revealed himself, not as a being existing somewhere far away, but as the God of salvation—as *my* and *our* God, who is personally concerned with my and our life. Theology has to do with the God of the covenant, 'Deus qui sub ratione Deitatis est salus nostra' ('God who under the aspect of his godhead is our salvation'). This saving aspect of God forms an essential part of the content of faith. Something possesses this saving significance through the fact that it was revealed.[107] Every revealed truth is therefore a religious truth. This clearly shows how incongruous was the position of so-called 'kerygmatic' theology, which claimed to deal in theology only with those truths of faith that have a saving value, as though there were other truths that do not have this saving significance—truths that ought preferably to be confined to the periphery of our theology and preaching.

It is of course a fact that the theologians of the later scholastic period, unlike those of the patristic and the earlier scholastic periods (see, in this connection, the medieval meaning of the *articulus fidei*—the saving value of the datum of faith functioning here as the principle according to which the articles were ordered), directed their attention exclusively to the *determinatio fidei* that is, to [169] the delimiting of the faith—and in the long run lost sight of the religious aspect of the truths of faith. It was to a great extent in reaction to this that kerygmatic theology arose, studying primarily the saving value of revelation, but on the other hand neglecting its intelligibility. Both of these onesided approaches

[106] *AAS* 45 (1953), 682-90.

[107] Aquinas, *3 Sent.*, d. 24, q. 3, a. 1, ad 3: 'Non omnia quae in divina sapientia supra rationem sunt, ad fidem pertinent, sed solum *cognitionem finis supernaturalis* et eorum quibus in finem illum supernaturaliter ordinamur' ('not everything which is above human reason in the divine wisdom pertains to faith, but only the *recognition of our supernatural end* and of those things which supernaturally direct us to that end').

forget that being itself, reality, is a value for man. We cannot, however, arrive at the saving value of a dogma unless we reach—as far as it lies within our ability—the intelligibility of faith itself, by making ourselves aware of the content of faith itself. And it is simply impossible, because of the very structure of human knowledge, to make ourselves aware in this way of the content of faith without also implicating concepts. The objective *being* of the content of faith, and thus its intelligibility, is its saving value—the saving value is not simply added to the content of faith. To dissociate the value of the content of faith from the *determinatio fidei* is to run the risk of slipping into a vague mysticism, since only the sense of the content of revelation, which is understood in faith, is the emanating principle of the ethical and religious activity of living christianity. Scientific theology, practised according to the objective demands of the content of faith, is consequently also the best kerygmatic theology. The saving value must emerge, not from pious corollaries that are added, but from scientific theological speculation about faith itself.

In this function, it is obvious that theology also provides a philosophical analysis and expression of the whole problem of human life and existence. For, although the mystery of salvation and theology transcend the plan of philosophy, the philosophical problem nonetheless raises questions to which only faith can provide a perhaps unsuspected and transcendental, but a
[170] certainly ultimate and essential, answer. The whole of this philosophical consideration is brought within the context of faith, and within theology it develops into what is called a 'christian philosophy'.

(4) The *praeambula fidei*: a deeper knowledge of faith through the theological study of the natural basis of faith

Life led in the light of revelation is a life led in personal communion with the living God, man's encounter in faith with his God. Such an encounter presupposes a natural basis—the existence of two persons, God and man, who meet each other, with all the natural implications of what is implied in the human state of being a person. If man does not make definite contact with God at one point that is not grace (in the theological sense of the word), then the God who reveals himself cannot address man meaningfully. Hence the solemn declaration by the church that the existence of God can in principle be naturally known[108] and that the human soul is immortal.[109] These and other natural truths are called the *praeambula fidei,* and form the vital basis on which faith is made meaningful to man. Man's reaching out for God and the life after death must in some way be clear to him from his secular, human situation, if God's

[108] DS 3004, 3026 (=DR 1785,1806).
[109] DS 1440 (=DR 738).

covenant activity with man is to be meaningful for him and assimilated by him. Thus, the secular problem of the state of being man must, for example, to some extent raise the eschatological problem, if the christian revelation of the *eschata* or last things are to be meaningful to man. Faith is, after all, not a belief in nonsense or in contradictions. The problem of the human experience of life, as [171] made explicit in philosophy, forms a natural basis for the life of faith. Although it has to be reinterpreted in a catholic sense, Bultmann's thesis concerning the need for an 'anterior understanding' *(Vorverständnis)* is a thoroughly christian thesis which the church always accepts in her constant struggle against fideist tendencies. Theology, as speculation about the faith, has therefore the task of throwing light on the *praeambula fidei.* In a pre-critical stage of human consciousness, it was sufficient to be pre-critically, spontaneously, and naturally convinced of these *praeambula.* The first christians had, for example, no need to prove the existence of God as a basis for faith—the generally accepted idea of God's existence was sufficient as a natural basis for faith. In a critical stage of human consciousness, however, such as our own time, faith itself demands that the *praeambulum fidei* be worked out critically and scientifically. At this level, theology clearly has great need of philosophy. With the help of philosophy, the theologian can explore the human basis of faith (for example, the immortality of the soul as an attribute or implication of human personality). This at the same time ensures the authentic presentation of the distinctive character of the life of faith itself (man's immortality, for example, as an implication of his intimacy in grace with the living God). Both views of man's immortality are quite different, but they nonetheless have a common point of contact.

The theologian makes use of philosophy here with the ultimate aim of serving a theological purpose. This does not, however, mean that, since he already accepts, for example, the existence of God in faith, he can afford to be careless about the so-called 'proof' of the existence of God, as though he could provide a proof overnight when philosophers have spent their whole lives [172] wrestling with the problem. Apart from the fact that this betrays a real lack of seriousness. It also means that the theologian in this case completely loses sight of the value of the *praeambulum*! The explication of the existence of God must therefore take place in as critical a manner as it does in philosophy. But it is also true that the theological context within which the theologian clarifies the *praeambulum fidei* gives his thought an orientation towards those aspects of the human reality that can lead him to a satisfactory solution. The search for truth presupposes good will and openness of mind, qualities that are a priori present in the sphere of faith itself. There is more. In the fundamental problems of human life—problems that are concerned with man's destiny and the ultimate meaning of his life—man is readily influenced by affective prejudices.

Whenever God is considered, even only as a hypothesis, man can never remain neutral. He knows in advance that the result is bound to contain consequences concerning his attitude to life. This seriously interferes with his insight into the anthropological basis of faith, all the more so because he and all mankind live in a situation tainted by sin. Tradition also refers to a moral necessity of revelation to be able to understand these *praeambula* in the proper way. Actually faith and religion have in general been the deepest source of inspiration for these philosophical truths. Even Plato was aware that he should establish the *religious* conviction of the immortality of the soul, as expressed in the Greek religions in the sixth and the fifth centuries, on a *rational* basis. This is a case of pagan religious life providing the inspiration for philosophy. The need to explore these *praeambula* theologically is so compelling that, if there is no existing philosophy, the life of faith itself will create one of its own, in order to be able to reflect
[173] meaningfully about faith. This occurred in the case of the patristic thinking about the resurrection of the body. None of the known philosophies—neither the aristotelian nor the platonic method—was capable of providing the elements required for the elucidation of this belief without contradictions. The church fathers therefore created, from faith itself, a christian anthropology, by means of which the attempt was made to assess the correct relationship between the soul and the body. Athenagoras thus arrived at a new conception of man: 'If there is no resurrection, human nature is no longer genuinely *human*.'[110] Examination of the *praeambula fidei* is therefore one of the authentic functions of speculative theology, as a science of the intelligibility of faith.

I must in this connection also mention the apologetic function of theology—the *theologia fundamentalis,* which is also to some extent concerned with the natural basis of faith. This does not imply that we should base faith on natural insights. The guarantee of faith, which is of a supernatural kind, is to be found in faith itself, the act of believing. Faith is not a conclusion drawn from an examination of history from which it should appear that God has really addressed man. It is in and through the affective attraction of grace (the *lumen fidei* which reaches the intellect via the will, according to the definition given by the thomist tradition) that we come into contact, in the act of faith, with God's testimony.

God's invitation to believe, to which I come in the act of faith, is what motivates my consent in faith. I believe because I rely on, and place my trust in,
[174] the grace of the God who invites me to believe. Grace itself draws me and establishes in me the disposition and the willingness to accept what the church proposes that I should believe. Faith is, however, not simply an act of grace—it

[110] *De resurrectione mortuorum* 13 (*PG* 6, 999).

is also an act, in grace, of *man*. This poses the problem: how can I find a moral justification for the fact that I give my consent to something, the inner evidence of which I do not see, but in connection with which I confidently rely on the word of God? I must therefore have moral guarantees. With my natural intellect I can approach the fact of God's revelation through the converging interplay of various signs, all of which point to the fact that a special intervention on the part of God is active in christianity. Everything converges on the same point—everything that happened in the Old Testament and in Christ, and that is happening now in living members of Christ's church today, points with strong moral certainty in the direction of the fact that all this is in a very special sense the work of God, and cannot be explained without reference to this divine intervention. On this basis, I have sufficient humanly based guarantees that I am not being morally foolish in bestowing my intellect in faith on what is not evident in itself. The act of faith itself is infallible and absolutely certain by virtue of the grace of faith and the reasonable human justification of my act is morally certain. It is not that this reasonable justification gives me faith— it only explains the moral basis of my act when I reflect critically about it. It is therefore necessary to make a distinction between the natural value of faith as a datum of spontaneous human life and the natural value of faith in theological reflection and scientific study. Believing christians in the concrete may be unable to express the human grounds for their faith in words, but nonetheless really possess a justification of it. Present-day apologists therefore [175] have a great responsibility in an age such as our own, when the life of faith is so lacking in homogeneity. They must above all take the typology of the life of faith into account— a child's 'reasonable' justification of his faith is not the same as that of a woman, and a woman's justification is again different from that of an adult man. Apologetics must be very sensitive to the contemporary situation, then, since the moral justification of an act, although it is always tied to objective norms, is nonetheless very personal and sometimes that can differ from person to person.[111]

Conclusion. It will be clear from the foregoing discussion of the functions of speculative theology that it is in no sense a superstructure to faith, or something that begins where positive theology ends. In all its functions, theology is both positive and speculative. It is impossible to be a good dogmatic theologian unless one also devotes oneself to the study of holy scripture, patristics, later theology, and so on, as well as contemporary philosophy. Aquinas himself provides us with an example of this. We can

[111] *Theologia fundamentalis* includes not only apologetics but also that part of theology which seeks to explain the essence itself of theology and its method. This is attempted, for example, in the different sections and chapters of this book.

scarcely demand that the dogmatic or moral theologian should be a specialist in all these spheres, but the results of his theological thought will certainly to a very great extent depend on the measure in which he is adequately abreast of all this. Without scientific research, no living and developing theology is possible, and however 'up to date' one may aim to be, one's theology will inevitably become silted up into a flimsy actualist activity that will collapse like
[176] a house of cards at the first serious criticism. It is hardly possible to think of renewing theology with the help of a few insights into the bible and a few modern existential ideas, the deeper implications of which are barely understood because the works of Heidegger, Sartre, or Merleau-Ponty themselves have frequently not even been read. In such cases, what should be an intelligible clarification of the word of salvation becomes no more than idle chatter.

4. THE TENSION BETWEEN THEOLOGICAL INCARNATION AND DISINCARNATION

Theology is always a 'stammering' in the face of the transcendent mystery of faith: 'balbutiendo ut possumus excelsa Dei resonamus' ('by stuttering out the great truths of God as best we can we echo them'). It is in theology a matter of good form constantly to acknowledge this humility, which is not merely a question of words, but also, something that must be apparent in the manner in which theology is practised. The attention of theology must always be directed to the mystery of salvation that is announced and not to the human means which help us to approach it. In this way, theology must always maintain a middle position. In the content of faith there is both a tendency towards incarnation in human thought and a fundamental resistance to rationalisation. On the one hand, theology should not sink into so-called 'evangelism', which is only aware of the mystery and the 'folly of faith', nor should it tend towards an uncontrolled incarnation, which is only conscious of the meaningful intelligibility of faith. We know from the history of the church that 'pure evangelism' which refuses to become incarnate in doctrine and institution
[177] results in the ultimate suicide of the genuine evangelical attitude, as, for example, in the case of the *fraticelli*.[112] But on the other hand, we also know from church history that, whenever faith becomes too incarnate, as though it could be completely absorbed by human thought, there is always an imminent danger of naturalism and rationalism. Sound theology can only develop if it progresses diffidently between this Scylla and that Charybdis. It must actively maintain a

[112] See DS 910-16 (=DR 484-90).

constant tension between incarnation and disincarnation, between transcendence and humanising. In this sense, theology is, at the level of thought, a problem of what is called 'christian humanism', of the natural and the supernatural. And, just as the harmonious relationship between the natural and the supernatural is, at the moral level of human life, not a 'datum', but a task full of conflicts and risks, so too does the harmonious relationship between the impulse towards incarnation and disincarnation, at the level of theological thought, only come about dramatically in conflicts and polemics, between stern excommunications and splendid syntheses. Throughout history, therefore, theology is always passing through a crisis or growth, as a result of which its true face is always appearing in a purer form 'until we all attain to the unity of the faith' (Eph 4:13).

5. THEOLOGY AS THE LIVING ORGAN OF THE CHURCH

Theology is a science of the content of faith, of which the immediate norm is the church. The content of revelation is a communal possession of the church, the fundamental value of the church's life. The authority of the church is itself governed by the norm of the content of constitutive revelation and thus at the same time by scripture. Theology studies this deposit as it has been explicitly [178] laid down in the bible and as it is present in the living church, and is therefore responsible for preparing the way for the doctrine and the *kerygma* of the church's teaching authority. In this sense, the teaching authority, itself determined by the objective content of revelation, must learn from theologians, despite the fact that it is always the norm and the judge of all theological statements about the bible, tradition, and so on, and that it does not rely in its apostolic teaching office on theological advice but on the charisma of the teaching function. As Congar correctly observed (in connection with positive theology),

> What the teaching church requires of the positive theologian is that he should exercise a kind of biblical and patristic function within and close to the teaching church, to present tradition to the church in the monuments and testimonies of this tradition.[113]

This function of serving the church applies equally to modern speculative theology, which helps the church's doctrinal and pastoral authority in its guidance of the moral and religious life of faith in the church and the world. Theologians must therefore be the living organs (besides other, non-scientific,

[113] Y. Congar, *Vraie et fausse réforme,* Paris, 1950, 529-30.

properly religious organs) through which the church reflects about her deposit of faith and consciously appropriates it.

Theology is, then, in the service of the church as the *human* (and thus fallible) critical authority of the life of the church—of its preaching, its spiritual life, and so on—whereas the church's teaching office is the official critical authority (and thus, in certain circumstances, infallible) for the whole of the life of the church and for theology itself. This function of serving the church implies, within the
[179] limits defined by the teaching office, a certain freedom for the theologian and for theological thought (in accordance with the demands of the content of revelation)—theology would not be able to exercise this function of service to the church if there was no opportunity for *serious* new attempts to be expressed.

The *ecclesial* character of theology means that the task of teaching in a faculty of the church is a specifically *ecclesiastical* one with a 'canonical mission'. The doctrinal *kerygma* is the exclusive task of the apostolic office, and therefore of the hierarchy of the church (or of whoever is delegated to this task by the hierarchy). Scientific theology, on the other hand, is in principle the task of every believer, whoever he may be, so long as he wishes to put himself at the service of the life of the church in this capacity. The official and ecclesiastical *teaching* of theology, however, requires a canonical mission, since it is the scientific extension of the apostolic *kerygma.* Theology is finally protected by its ecclesial nature from personal preferences for, and personal emphases placed on, certain data of faith. Theology is attentive to the emphases of the content itself of the mystery of salvation, and even needs to maintain a certain distance from purely contemporary problems, in order to present the totality of faith as purely as possible and to avoid the danger of furnishing a one-sided theological synthesis of faith. As christians, we do not live from one truth of the faith, but from the totality of dogma, even though this may still be implicit in many respects. The explication of an aspect of faith that has perhaps continued to remain implicit because of the contemporary situation always means that the life of faith is broadened and deepened. Although modern theology has above
[180] all the function of serving the present generation and that of the immediate future, it can only exercise this function purely when it puts this generation in touch with the integral synthesis of faith as suggested by positive theology and elaborated by speculative theology. In the long run, a speculation of this kind will certainly be the most up to date, and able to provide a sound answer to contemporary problems. Otherwise, we are confronted with the verifiable contemporary fact that very many problems—problems not always of central, but undeniably of immediate, importance to us today—give rise to fine new theological treatises or even to new disciplines, while we are still obliged to look for the essence of revelation in the classic but out-of-date treatises about (for instance) 'the one-in-three God, Christ, the sacraments, and the last things'.

The essence of theology is not itself reflected on, as if this were not of current importance. This is ultimately bound to distort the concrete life of faith into unauthentic experiences and to truncate the integral meaning of faith, and theology will thus be committing an offence against its responsibility and task in respect of the soundness of the christian life of faith. A properly orientated theology must constantly act as a counterbalance against this subjective tendency towards one-sidedness and misplaced emphasis. Such a theology is moreover also the best constructive criticism of earlier tendencies towards one-sidedness, which are otherwise only combated by one-sided arguments in the opposite direction.

6. THE STRUCTURAL DIVISIONS OF THEOLOGY

I have already referred—in the introduction to this chapter (see pp. [95-102] above)—to the fact that theology gradually became divided into branches. I do [181] not propose to go into the genesis of these divisions here. For the most part, they came about because of the defects of the existing scientific theology, but at the same time also because of a certain need to specialise, since it became impossible for one theologian to deal with the whole of theology. Specialisation of this kind is the inevitable consequence of a living and growing science, and it need not be a disadvantage so long as the whole science continues to be reflected in each individual branch, and moral theology (for example) is not divorced from its breeding ground, dogmatic theology.

The correct place for a particular branch in a particular 'treatise', to make a harmonious development, can also be disputed. This is all to a certain extent relative, however. I cannot discuss the problem fully here[114], but can only draw attention to its most important aspect. This is that the fundamental vision of christianity—the historic plan of redemption in Christ as the revelation of the trinitarian mystery of God and thus the salvation of man—must be gradually illuminated in the whole science of theology; and that thus fundamental vision, suggested to us by revelation itself, is thoroughly elucidated in each individual branch of theology, including moral theology, since God's invitation to salvation in Christ and his church demands an active, living response from man in the world.[115]

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[114] See, for example, K. Rahner, The Prospects for Dogmatic Theology' and 'A Scheme for a Treatise of Dogmatic Theology', chapters 1 and 2 of *Theological Investigations* I, London, 1961, 1-19 and 20-38.

[115] In addition to those mentioned in the footnotes, the following works have been consulted in connection with this article:

a. Concerning the term *theology:* P. Battifol, 'Theologia, Theologi', *EPL* 5 (1928), 205-21; Y. Congar, 'Théologie', *DTC* xv-1 (1946), 341-6; J. de Ghellinck, 'Pagina et S. Pagina: Histoire d'un mot et transformation de l'objet primitif désigné', *Misc. Pelzer,* 23-59; G. Paré, A. Brunet, and P. Tremblay,

La renaissance du XIIe siècle, Paris and Ottawa, 1933, 102f. and 307-12; R. Roques, 'Notes sur la notion de theologia chez le ps.-Denis Aréopagite', *RAM* 25 (1949), 200-12; J. Stilmayr, 'Mannigfaltige Bedeutung von Theologia und Theologe', *TG* 11 (1919), 296-309.

b. Concerning the essence and methods of theology: J. Beumer, *Theologie als Glaubensverständnis,* Würzburg 1953; J. Beumer, 'Konklusionstheologie?', *ZKT* 63 (1939), 360-5; H. Birault, 'La foi et la pensée d'après Heidegger', *Philosophies Chrétiennes: Recherches et débats* 10, Paris, 1955, 108-32; C. Boyer, 'Qu'est-ce que la théologie?', *Greg* 21 (1940), 255-66; M. Chenu, *Une école de théologie,* Kain and Etiolles 1937; M. Chenu, 'Position de la théologie', *RSPT* 24 (1935), 232-57; Y. Congar, 'Théologie', *DTC XV-1* (1946), 341-502; Y. Congar, 'Comptes rendus', *BT* 15 (1938-9), 490-505 and 528f.; T. Deman, 'Composantes de la théologie', *RSPT* 28 (1939), 286-344; H. Duméry, 'Critique et religion', *RMM* 4 (1954), 435-53; K. Eschweiler, *Die zwei Wege der neueren Theologie,* Augsburg, 1926; A. Gardeil, *Le donné révélé et la théologie,* Jusivy 1908 and 1932²; R. Guelluy, 'La place des théologiens dans l'Eglise et la société mediévales', *MM* 1, 571-89; M. Labourdette, 'La théologie, intelligence de la foi', *RT* 46 (1964), 5-44; A. Lang, 'Die ersten Aufsätze zu systematischer Glaubensbegründung', *DTF* 26 (1948), 361-95; J. Leclercq, 'L'idéal du théologien au moyen âge', *RSR* 21 (1947), 121—48; B. Poschmann, *Der Wissenschaftscharakter der katholischen Theologie,* Breslau, 1932; G. Rabeau, *Introduction à la théologie,* Paris 1926; G. Söhngen, *Philosophische Einübung in der Theologie,* Freiburg and Munich, 1955; G. van Ackeren, *Sacra Doctrina: the Subject of the First Question of the Summa Theologiae of St Thomas Aquinas,* Rome 1952; H. Urs von Balthasar, 'Was soll Theologie? Ihr Ort und ihre Gestalt im Leben der Kirche', *WW* 9 (1953), 325-32; P. Wyser, *Theologie als Wissenschaft,* Salzburg and Leipzig, 1938.

c. Concerning the history of theology: R. Aubert, *La théologie catholique au milieu du XXe siècle*, Paris 1954; J. Beumer, *Theologie als Glaubensverständnis*, Würzburg, 1953; M. Chenu, *La théologie comme science au XIIIe siècle*. Paris 1957; M. Chenu, *La théologie comme science au XIIIe siècle*, Paris 1957'; J. de Ghellinck, *Le mouvement théologique du XIIe siècle*, Bruges 1948²; J. de Ghellinck, *L'essor de la littérature latine au XIIe siècle*, two parts, Paris and Brussels, 1946; M. Grabmann, *Geschichte der scholastischen Methode*, two parts, Freiburg, 1909-11; M. Grabmann, *Die theologische Erkenntnis- und Einleitungslehre des hl. Thomas von Aquin*, Fribourg, 1948; E. Hocédez, *Histoire de la théologie au XIXe siècle*, three parts, Brussels, 1947-52; A. Landgraf, *Einführung in die Geschichte der theologischen Literatur der Frühscholastik*, Regensburg, 1948; G. Paré, A. Brunet, and P. Tremblay, *La renaissance de XIIe siècle*, Paris and Ottawa, 1933; D. van den Eynde, *Les normes de l'enseignement chrétien dans la littérature patristique*, Louvain, 1933.

Chapter 6

THE BIBLE AND THEOLOGY

1. GOD'S ADDRESS AND MAN'S RESPONSE: SCRIPTURE AND THE CHURCH

Revealed religion is by definition a dialogue, an *encounter* on the part of man with the living God. This is, I know, a modern existential catch-word, a fashionable word that is used in season and out of season. It sometimes takes considerable courage to use it yet again. Nonetheless, it is truly only another, more modern word for a reality that has always been recognised in the life of religion—the reality of man's personal relationship with God by virtue of grace and God's personal address. If we take the phrases 'encounter with God' and 'experience of God' in their strict meaning, then we must accept that they define the heavenly vision of God and not the life of grace on earth. In the case of our religious life on earth, we can only refer to an experience of faith and love, in which an interpersonal relationship with God in faith is made possible by a subjective mediation, a knowledge that we are addressed in grace by God. But it is also a datum of faith that there is no *objective mediation* in this communion of grace with God. By definition, this means that the communion of grace is a real [185] interpersonal relationship between God and man, a partnership in which God personally addresses man, and man personally replies to him in faith. This is an encounter with God in faith. The dogma of grace is thus correctly and soundly expressed in modern terms.

Faith is man's response to the living God's disclosure of himself. The approach to the inward aspect of a being depends upon the nature of that being and takes place in various ways. Every being is in principle open to other beings, but the mode of this openness is different in the case of material things, of spiritual beings, of man, and finally of God.

Material things have no inward, personal aspect. They are given up to the searching and dominant spirit of man. For this reason, we never refer in this context to 'encounters' with things, plants, and animals: man freely lays his hands on them.

It is quite different in the case of spiritual beings. They are, by virtue of their freedom, the source of what they really are—they have, or rather they are, an

inward, personal secret. It is not possible freely to lay hands on this secret from outside. They are accessible to others in their inward aspect only insofar as they reveal and disclose themselves in freedom. A spiritual being *makes* itself known. The more a spiritual being disposes of itself as a free person, the more the openness towards the other will be a personal act of freely giving love, of intimate self-communication. The other really *encounters* the fellow person. This encounter is only possible if there is a willingness to meet on both sides—on the one hand, an intimate self-disclosure, and on the other, an attentive, receptive surrender.

It is even more complicated when human beings are involved. Every human
[186] relationship with another takes place via corporeality. The human person is outwardly open through his corporeality. This also points to the limited nature of man's free, personal possession. The body reveals, but at the same time conceals, the secret of the human person. Whether he wants to or not, man is partly open and accessible to his fellow men—his corporeality betrays his inward aspect. Partly, however, he only reveals himself in freedom, because his physical expressions to a certain extent originate with a free act A personal encounter between men does not come about through pure mastery of the other's physical, unintentional expressions. That would reduce man to an object. A truly human encounter takes place only when the human person voluntarily reveals himself to the other, who opens himself to this revelation. Every forced approach to a fellow human being is an elimination, a disregarding, of the human person, and can therefore never be a 'personal encounter'. In such a case, all that is reached in the fellow human being is what is for him not typically personal. The secret of his life is concealed from us. That is why, in every case of true human encounter between men, *revelation* and *faith* are present. It is only in an environment of love that this revelation and this faith acquire their full significance.

God is the absolute source of his inner secret and a person in the absolute sense of the word. (Precisely for this reason, although it is beyond our comprehension, he is *per se* one being in the unity of three persons.) He can be approached in the secret of his personal life only when he allows himself to be encountered. It is only in this case that revelation and faith, as the constitutive factors of the true encounter, gain their full significance. There is therefore, in
[187] the idea of the 'encounter with God', a reference to our own natural existential experience. Without this secular, human significance, the theological concept of 'encounter with God' and the concepts 'revelation' and 'faith' would have no meaning for us.

Although we can to a certain extent view the absolute reality of God as a mystery from creation, in which God reveals himself so to speak indirectly, the real form of this mystery was fully revealed to us only in the history of

salvation, which reached its climax in the *epiphaneia,* the epiphany or appearance, of the Son of God as a man among us. Man's response in faith to the God of revelation is essentially correlative to this objective revelation or self-disclosure on God's part. Nothing, therefore, can be said about the structure of the act of faith that is not essentially related to the content of revelation itself. Both the act and the content of faith are based on grace which, as it were, holds this essential correlation between believing and the content of faith together in us through the spiritual affinity, given to us by God in the light of faith, with the saving reality that comes to us from history and above all from the historical reality of Christ. This intensive unity of the inward and outward aspects also has an anthropological basis. Every human activity is characterised by the human condition—the material world, our being-in-the-world, is our only access to explicit consciousness of any sphere of knowledge. We know only in the physical state. We only know the non-physical insofar as this is connected with the physical—the 'I' and the 'others' insofar as they are in the world, and ultimately God too, insofar as he is the creator of all this, or insofar as he manifests himself in grace in this world, that is, in the history of salvation. Consequently every human activity is characterised by an *outward orientation* and by an *inward spiritual aspect,* an inward appeal that inspires our human acts [188] in and towards the world. Although it is only brought about in grace, believing is nonetheless a real human act, characterised by our human condition. That is why the act of faith is also characterised by its orientation 'outward' towards the world of men and things in which Christ appeared at a definite moment of time and founded his church. At the same time, this act of faith is also characterised by an inward aspect, by an accompanying conversion, a 'turning inward', in which (in a constant outward orientation) an inward spiritual appeal in grace is also experienced, a divine invitation which calls upon us and inspires us to take the personal initiative to surrender in faith to what comes to meet us from public revelation. In the grace of faith. God gives us a spiritual affinity with precisely that reality that we encounter in our being in and experience of the history of salvation.

We must keep these two aspects of faith constantly in mind if we want to consider the problem of the (to some extent) different standpoints of the exegetical or biblical view and the dogmatic view of faith. Believing includes an aspect of conscious knowledge which, for the christian, is not simply any knowledge, but a knowledge through being addressed. This address evokes a listening. Revelation and faith together bring about a dialogue between the living God and man. This structure is to be found not only in faith in constitutive, or completed, revelation, but also in faith in the revelation that is still taking place and is still open. For this open revelation came about dialogically, that is, in dialogue. God gradually unfolded his saving plan in and

through the dialogic relationship of the Jewish people, in faithfulness or in
[189] opposition, with Yahweh. Revelation was brought about by God himself, not only as the creator who sustains human history, but also— and formally—as the God of salvation, acting in respect of the very human freedom that makes history. It was in human history that God brought about what he planned to do in his concern for man and his salvation, and he did this in such a way that his action to save man became visible in a veiled manner in history as an act of God. This saving activity itself was revelation— it was revealed by becoming history, and it became history by being revealed. In this way, revelation was a growing process which was given its definitive form in Christ and in the early apostolic church. The Old Testament has, as an expression of religious faith, a certain independent value of its own, but this Old Testament revelation must ultimately be seen principally as the prehistory of the christian revelation, as a growth towards the mystery of Christ, which is the centre and the *telos,* the end and goal, of the whole of revelation. The entire salvation history of the Old Testament was directed towards this final stage of revelation, and the first word of revelation can only be fully understood when it is considered in the perspective of this definitive revelation in Christ.

Revelation, then, is to be found primarily in God's saving activity. Nevertheless, it is only *as understood by* the people of God that this saving history acquires the full significance of revelation. This history had, in other words, to be understood in grace. From its consciousness of salvation, of being the people of God, Israel understood its history and interpreted it as an act made by God in respect of his people. God's saving activity was not only a divine act, but also a divine interpretation of this act, in and through the prophetic word, which threw light on the presence and meaning of God's
[190] saving activity. God did not simply say something *about* our salvation—he caused it to come about in history, the meaning of which he himself had to interpret in and through the prophetic word:

> You must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man. (2 Pet 1:20f; see also Amos 3:8; Is 42:9.)

Revelation-in-reality and revelation-in-word are thus the pillars supporting the religion of revelation. But this is not all. It is clear from the comparative history of religion that a community which is historically founded and maintains itself in history almost of necessity realises this by means of its 'book', its own 'scripture'.[1] This anthropological structure is introduced by God as an essential

[1] K. Rahner, *Inspiration in the Bible,* London 1965. See also his article 'On the Inspiration of the Bible' in *The Bible in a New Age,* London, 1965, 1-15.

element into the revealed religion. It was by way of Israel's oral traditions, which themselves were the expression of Israel's own awareness of its salvation and of its religious reflection about its history, sifted and tested by the prophets, that the bible came into being. In scripture the people of God became explicitly conscious of its election by God and of the way in which this came about, and in its association with scripture and its attentiveness to the prophetic word it understood and constituted itself as the people of God. God brought about the constitutive elements of his people, including holy scripture, in the same way as he brought about Israel itself. Rahner even sees in this the foundation of the inspiration of the bible.[2] The history of salvation, the word, and holy scripture [191]
together form one single continuous activity of grace, which appears to us in a historical and tangible form. The following structure can be distinguished in this process. God's saving activity was primarily realised in the history of Israel, as a living and visible communion with God. The religious dimension of this history was expressed in the community's growing consciousness of salvation, by reflection about and understanding in grace of historical events which were apparently purely natural. This gradual growth in the community's awareness of its supernatural essence took place only in the tradition, which represented the work of God in the community in a more and more splendid perspective and made the people responsible for its own supernatural realisation. Yahweh expressed himself in this tradition as the word of God. Finally, God set his seal on this tradition in holy scripture, with the guarantee (of divine inspiration) that this expression was the true reflection of his saving decision as he wanted to see this realised in his people.[3] This structure (of tradition, word and becoming scripture) is also the same in the case of the New-Testament revelation, although this process was accomplished in a shorter space of time.

Although we should not regard the holy scriptures as the totality of the revealed christian religion, we must concede that they form an essential, fundamental, constitutive, and irreplaceable element of it. Together with the [192]
apostolic office, living christian preaching and the sacraments, they form part of the church's constitution, as instituted by Christ. They therefore form part of the fundamental structure of the apostolic church, of the deposit of faith which acts as a constant norm to the post-apostolic church. In this respect, the church,

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[2] *Inspiration in the Bible* and 'On the Inspiration of the Bible'.

[3] See also H. Suasso, 'Heilige Schrift en Traditie in het Oude Testament', *Bijd.* 15 (1954), 1-23. See also L. Cerfaux, 'La parole de Dieu', *Etudes de Pastorale 5: La Bible et le prêtre,* Louvain, 1951, 29-30: 'The truth is that inspiration, in the technical theological sense which this idea assumes when we apply it to the bible, is not an entirely new intervention which has its meaning in itself. It continues and completes a movement, and the reason for its existence is to be found in the origin of this movement.'

and consequently the church's teaching office, have to consider holy scripture as *normative*. This is not contradicted by the affirmation that the church's teaching authority is the ultimate judge of all scriptural interpretation. Because of its apostolic charisma the church is the guarantee of correct exegesis. Its teaching authority is the direct norm of *our* faith, but this authority is itself determined by the early apostolic church, and thus also by scripture, as its norm. Drawing nourishment and life from the bible and the reality of salvation, the church is the norm of our faith, our exegesis, and our theological speculation or dogmatics.

2. THE QUESTION PROPER TO DOGMATICS: THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT OF GOD'S WORD

This means that dogmatic theology is not possible without exegesis of biblical theology. It is not that the dogmatic theologian looks in the bible for references in support of his own theses. The proper relationship is precisely the other way around—christian exegesis and biblical theology have a critical task with regard to the contemporary propositions of dogmatic theology. Of course, scripture is not the only source of dogmatics, but, as the original archives of the mind of the church, it is the constant and inviolable norm for every theological activity, even though it must be read *in* and *with* the church whose scripture it
[193] is. In this respect, dogmatic theology implies christian exegesis and biblical theology. The dogmatic theologian, then, is at the same time also an exegete and a biblical theologian.

On the other hand, however, dogmatic theology is more than biblical exegesis or theology. The content of faith is the content of God's address to man. God's word is directed through the medium of salvation history and the church's scriptural teaching authority to the whole of mankind, including men who are alive today. God's word must again and again be related to the contemporary spiritual situation of the men who listen to it here and now. This listening to the one word of God here and now—the bible itself testifies to this contemporary reception of the word—is so intimately connected with revelation that it to some extent coincides with revelation itself. Despite the newness of its formulation in comparison with a scriptural affirmation, the definition of a dogma is a reflection of the original word of revelation. When, for example, the Council of Chalcedon expressed the saving reality which is Christ in the affirmation: 'two natures, one person'[4], the community of the faithful at that time heard the same in these words as the apostles had heard

[4] See DS 301-02 (=DR 148).

from the reality of Christ, but their manner of appropriating this same word of God was different. This appropriation nonetheless forms part of the dogma—it is the dogma itself. A dogma is a correct, although never exhaustive listening to a reality or a word of revelation. The *manner in which* revelation and scripture are heard again and again by man *who makes history* is precisely what is called 'tradition'. Tradition is simply the constant and always contemporary listening [194] in grace to the reality or word of revelation which found its constitutive expression in the apostolic church with its scripture. It is therefore possible to claim, along with other exegetes, that scripture has, as it were, a double context. The first is the biblical context proper, which is established by exegesis and biblical theology. The second is the context of each period of the church's history—in other words, the contemporary context. This is the context which is investigated by the dogmatic theologian and which is connected with what is known as the 'development of dogma'. It is important to note that there is no question of trying to find the later dogma *as such* in holy scripture. An exegesis of this kind would in fact be 'ento-egesis'. But the word of God, proclaimed in scripture, was not simply addressed to the Jews and to the early apostolic church—it is addressed to men of all times. The exegete attempts to establish precisely how this word was spoken to and heard by the Jewish people and the early church. The dogmatic theologian, on the other hand, attempts to establish how this same word, heard by Israel and the apostolic church but nonetheless addressed to us as well, should be heard in a pure form by us in the twentieth century. A study of this kind must be preceded by the establishment of precisely how God spoke to Israel and the apostolic church, and how these understood and experienced his word. That is why there can be no dogmatic theology without exegesis and biblical theology. The Old-Testament and apostolic listening to the word of God belongs to the constitutive phase of revelation. It is therefore *ephapax,* once-for-all—a unique, unrepeatable event, acting as a constant norm to the obedient listening of the post-apostolic church. Exegesis has consequently a position of honour in all theological speculation.

On the other hand, however, although public revelation is closed, God's [195] address to man is still a *present* reality. His revelation in Christ is a personal giving of himself by the living God. In it, he gives himself in a personal gesture to be intimately known and experienced by us. He comes forward in this gesture to meet man, inviting him to share a living communion with himself. That is why the saving reality of revelation, as directed towards us, includes not only God's historically datable saving acts with their prophetic interpretation (the so-called 'public revelation'), but also an inward address by God in and through the grace or 'light' of faith, by means of which we can also personally perceive and assent to God's gracious offer of salvation with our hearts. As de la Potterie has so painstakingly pointed out, the bible has itself expressed this in

the phrase *to chrisma tou hagiou*—'the chrism (unction) of the holy one (Holy Spirit).[5] This *chrisma* is the word of Christ himself, the *fides ex auditu* ('faith as listened to and heard'), as called to mind by the Holy Spirit, the *locutio interna* ('inner voice'). The inward *chrisma* is intrinsically linked with the *fides ex auditu*. The church's listening to the word of God has, expressed figuratively, a horizontal and a vertical dimension. There is an inner confrontation with God who proclaims himself here and now as well as proclaiming himself an *anamnesis,* a memorial and commemoration, of that to which scripture and
[196] tradition testify concerning God's speaking to man.[6] In connection with the scriptural doctrine of the 'unction of the Holy Spirit', the great medieval theologians, such as Aquinas, for example, imitating the fathers of the church, also refer to an 'inward, divine instinct that invites us to believe'.[7] An early council of the church, the Council of Orange, also mentions an inner impulse and illumination.[8] God's intervention in history, culminating in the person and the life of the God-man, is intelligible to us men in and through the public word of the divinely inspired prophets and ultimately of Christ himself. Scripture provides us with an inspired account of this and finally the heart of every believing christian is opened to the divine content and meaning of this revelation by the grace of faith. One of the fathers of the Council of Trent alluded to this reality of grace when he said:

> Because he was not always to remain among us physically the Son of God sent the Holy Spirit who will reveal God's secrets in the hearts of the faithful and will instruct the church *every day* until the end of time, and will settle any doubts that may arise in the minds of men.[9]

Divorced from public revelation, the inward grace of faith or the 'inward speaking of God to man' would be in no way explicit, and the word of God would thus not be heard. On the other hand, however, listening to outward, public revelation without this inward light of faith could not bring about a true
[197] surrender in faith to the word of God, as in that case it would not be heard according to its divine content.

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[5] See 1 Jn 2:20, 27; and I. de la Potterie, 'L'onction du Chrétien par la foi', *Bbl* 40 (1959), 12-69. This article provides an outline of the scriptural basis of the thomist doctrine of the *lumen fidei.* In my opinion, certain adjustments need to be made to de la Potterie's exegesis: see J. Ysebaert, *Greek Baptismal Terminology: Its Origins and Early Development,* Nijmegen, 1962, 263ff.

[6] For the *anamnesis* character of Christianity, see Nils A. Dahl, 'Anamnesis: Mémoire et commemoration dans le christianisme primitif', *StTh* 1 (1948), 69-95.

[7] See, for example, *EJ* c. 6, lect. 5; *ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 9, ad 3.

[8] See DS 377 (=DR 180), quoted in the *Constitution on the catholic faith* of the First Vatican Council (DS 3010=DR 1791).

[9] *Conc. Trid.,* ed. Goerres, V, 11; see also XII, 508.

It is clear, then, that faith in the church is determined by the historical event in Israel and in the man Jesus, as proclaimed in scripture. It will also be clear that this faith is the result too of the *present* self-revelation here and now of the heavenly Christ *through* his Spirit in the church.

This also means that dogmatic theology, if it wishes to hear the pure word of God, must study first scripture and then past tradition. But, because this same word is also spoken to us, the dogmatic theologian will have to ask different questions of scripture and tradition from those asked by the exegete or the historian. Among the questions asked by the exegete and the biblical theologian are, for example: What did Israel, inspired by God, think about itself as the people of God and about Yahweh as the God of Israel? What did Christ think about himself and about man? What did the early church, confronted with the risen Christ, think about itself and about Christ? Assuming all this, the dogmatic theologian goes further. It is not that he aims to extend the results of christian exegesis in human, philosophical ideas and build a superstructure on to what the exegete, guided by the church, has heard of this divine speaking. But, governed by the norm of what Israel and the apostolic church have heard of the word of God, the dogmatic theologian (in other words, the present-day believer who listens in holy obedience to the word of God from the vantage-point of his own, contemporary situation and meditates on it in holy reflection) has, as it were, the task of listening to the same word of God in all its inner associations in a new way and of formulating it for his own time. It is [198] really nothing new that he does, but it is something quite different. It is precisely this which indicates the difference in perspective between christian exegesis and dogmatics, and at the same time establishes the connection between the results of the two studies. This is because it is precisely this listening in grace to the word of God, that is, faith, which is the guarantee of the identity that exists between scripture and dogma, between scripture and tradition, and between scripture and a theology that is subject to the norm of the church and does not aim to be a superstructure built on to the heard word of God, but a reflection about it.

The difference between the point of view of christian exegesis and that of dogmatic theology should therefore not be seen as though the exegete is *outside* the faith of the church and studies biblical texts in the manner of a specialist studying secular literature. There is of course a radical difference between the point of view of pure biblical criticism or philological and literary exegesis and that of christian exegesis proper, although the latter does make use of the critical method. The difference, however, is that, like the dogmatic theologian, the christian exegete listens to the word of scripture in his research as a believer and, like the dogmatic theologian, tries to understand this word with his intellect illuminated by faith. In scholastic terms, it is possible to say that the

lumen quo of christian exegesis is the same as that of theology or of dogmatics. Both exegesis and dogmatics are critical sciences and both are also sciences of faith which employ critical thought. What is more, the object that is studied in this light is also materially the same in the case of both of these sciences of faith—it is the revealed word of God, as it is heard and accepted in the reaction
[199] of the believer. This, however, is the formal distinction between the christian exegesis and dogmatics. The manner in which the exegete hears and examines this revealed word of God in faith, systematises it, and synthesises it, differs from the manner in which the dogmatic theologian studies this same word of revelation in faith and attempts to synthesise it in accordance with its inner structural divisions. The christian exegete and the biblical theologian examine God's word as it was given to and heard by the Old-Testament people of God and the early apostolic church in its precise biblical context. The manner in which the exegete appeals to human reason is therefore also different from that of the dogmatic theologian. He seeks first and foremost to understand a given type of thinking about the faith, such as that of Paul, and is not concerned with speculative reasoning. The dogmatic theologian, on the other hand, examines the same word of God, but rather as it is addressed to all men at all times and as it should be heard by them here and now. We may indeed say, in the concrete, as it is addressed to *us,* the people of today.

This topical note—'as it is addressed to us, the people of today'—is not added because of a subjective feeling for contemporary needs, but in the knowledge that God does not simply address man, mankind in the abstract, but speaks to men who are making history, men in the concrete—man in biblical and in patristic times, medieval man, modern man and man today. This does not in any way place a relative value on the word of God. In faith, man in the concrete—man as he is at every period of history—is always in search of the objective content of God's revealed word. But, however absolute and unchangeable supernatural truth, like every truth, may be, it nonetheless
[200] shares, as a truth known by us in faith, in the characteristics of everything that is human—in the imperfection, the relative value, and the evolutive or historical aspect of every human possession of truth. The same meaningful datum can be approached and illuminated from various sides, with the result that different, but correct and complementary, views of the same reality are possible. This vision of truth from different perspectives is an essential factor in all human knowledge. It can be found in scripture itself. We rightly speak of a synoptic, a johannine, or a pauline view of Christ, and recognise the difference between the eschatological vision of the johannine writings and that of the pauline epistles, and so on. Listening to scripture and tradition, deciphering the many studies made in the history of the church of the word of revelation, and devoting his attention to the proclamation of the faith by the church of today

and to the various tendencies in the modern church, the dogmatic theologian is always trying to hear this same word of God in its totality and to synthesise it in accordance with its inner structural divisions—and to do this, moreover, ever more adequately, even though his work is essentially relative, in that he always leaves much for future generations to accomplish. He does all this so that God's word may speak to the present and the next generation concretely in present-day and future preaching. That is why his use of human reason and understanding is rather more an appeal to speculative reasoning, whereas that of the exegete is more an appeal to critical positive reasoning. This term should not, however, be wrongly understood, as sometimes happens. Speculative reasoning is not an ability to 'build something up' on to a datum, but an ability to grasp the data of faith as meaningful according to their inner intelligibility and their interrelationship, as, for example, Paul himself attempted to do. What [201] was done by Paul, who had the guarantee of the charisma of inspiration and was within the constitutive phase of revelation which had, at his time, not closed, is also done by the dogmatic theologian, who works in a purely scientific and thus fallible way—he tries to penetrate more deeply into the meaning of the given realities of salvation, by tracing their mutual relationship and their saving significance for human life and by attempting to throw light on their meaning by human analogies.

It is possible to object to some of the contributions made by exegetes and biblical theologians on the score that, although they do accurately reproduce the original conviction and ideas of the biblical authors, they (perhaps unconsciously) allow this description to pass as a normative description and neglect to use the critical element essential to dogmatic theology. The biblical theologian can, of course, only make use of this critical element when he functions not only as a biblical theologian, but also as (simply) a theologian—in other words, when he does not only listen to the bible (although he will do this first and foremost), but when he also listens to the church's life and thought in the light of the bible throughout the whole history of the church. No study of the dogmatics of the angels is, for example, complete when the New-Testament teaching on the angels has been accurately set out, and similarly no study of revealed mariology is complete simply by providing a full-length outline of the image of Mary in the gospels. But, on the other hand, the objection can be raised that certain dogmatic theologians are not acting as speculative theologians if they look for biblical evidence for already established theological arguments. It [202] is precisely because of the identity that exists, within christian development, between the word of God as testified by scripture, and the word of God as dogmatically defined, that there must be in scripture itself an objective dynamic force which can only be established by christian exegesis and dogmatic theology and not by the philological and literary method. This does not mean that

we make Paul or John say what the church now states explicitly to be true. It means that we point out the 'limits' of pauline or johannine thought in scripture as seen from the vantage-point of later dogmas. These limits are, as Lévie has rightly said[10], not purely negative—they indicate an imperfect state, a beginning, a tendency or, as Auzou expressed it, they are 'des réalités en marche'.[11]

3. THE 'SENSUS PLENIOR' OF SCRIPTURE

It is on this reality in depth of holy scripture that the so-called *sensus plenior*[12] of
[203] the Old Testament (i.e, its christian significance) and the *sensus plenior* of the New Testament must be based. Although it is not identical with the later explicit content of faith, this second plenary sense is nonetheless intimately connected with the development of dogma. The light of faith brings us into direct contact with the *reality* of Christ and with the whole reality of the mystery of salvation, and not simply with a biblical account *about* these realities. The truth never exists formally in a book or in a word. It is to be found in the writing and speaking and in the listening and living spirit. Divine revelation, which is presented to us in scripture and tradition, can only be perceived by us in our hearts when God himself discloses its meaning to us in our hearts by the light of faith. If the inspirer of the dogma—that is, the Spirit of Christ in and through the church's formulation—is also the author of scripture, albeit in the mode of the human, historically conditioned word, then it is clear that the first (that is, the biblical) pronouncement of the Holy Spirit concerning a definite reality of salvation will be inwardly related to the later word concerning the same reality of salvation that the Holy Spirit causes to be expressed in the dogma.

It is because this divine word became a human book that it calls, like every
[204] other text, for the historical, philological, and literary method. (The encyclical

[10] See 'L'Ecriture Sainte, parole de Dieu, parole d'homme', *NRT* 78 (1956), 561-92, 706-29; 'Les limites de la preuve d'Ecriture Sainte en théologie', *NRT* 71 (1949), 1009-29; 'Exégèse critique et interprétation théologique', *RSR* 39 (1951) *(Mélanges Lebreton* I), 237-52.

[11] G. Auzou, *La parole de Dieu,* Paris, 1956, 92.

[12] There is an immense bibliography relating to this subject, from which I can only select a few typical works: J. Coppens, *Les harmonies des deux Testaments,* Paris and Tournai, 1949; J. Coppens, 'Le probléme du sens plénier', *ETL* 34 (1958), 5-20; L. Cerfaux, 'Simples réflexions sur l'exégèse apostolique', *ETL* 25 (1949), 565-76; J. Gribomont, 'Sens plénier, sens typique et sens littéral', *ETL* 25 (1949), 577-87; R. E. Brown, *The sensus plenior of Sacred Scripture,* Baltimore 1955; R. E. Brown, 'The History and Development of the Theory of a plenior sensus', *CBQ* 15 (1963), 141-62; E. F. Sutcliffe, 'The Plenary Sense as a Principle of Interpretation', *Bbl* 34 (1953), 333-43; C. Courtade, 'Les Ecritures ont-elles un sens plénier ?', *RSR* 37 (1950), 481-99 (the author answers this question in the negative); see J. Coppens' reaction to this, *ETL* 27 (1951), 148-50; J. Michl, 'Dogmatischer Schriftbeweis und Exegese', *BZ* 2 (1958), 1-15; R. M. Grant, *The Letter and the Spirit,* London 1957; I. de la Potterie, 'Le sens de la parole de Dieu', *Lumen Vitae* 10 (1955), 15-30; J. Schmid, 'Die alttestamentlichen Zitate bei Paulus und die Theorie vom sensus plenior', *BZ* 3 (1959), 161-73.

Divino Afflante Spiritu insisted on this.) But it is the divinity of this word that eludes this method. This divine element can only be heard when the critical method is taken up into the light of faith that is 'in sympathy with' this saving reality. The intention of the Holy Spirit who 'has spoken through the prophets' transcends what the sacred writers were able, in their limitation, to express of it. But, despite their limitation, they nonetheless succeeded in expressing something, however vaguely, of what the Holy Spirit meant and of what was made clearly explicit in the later teaching. It is true that it is also the task of the christian exegete to warn the dogmatic theologian again and again against 'ento-getical' practice. The christian exegete has above all to establish, as far as he is able, the precise quality of, for example, Paul's thought, marking off the limits of pauline thought from what other sacred writers, later theologians, and even dogma itself have said about the same religious theme. On the other hand, however, revelation is a totality which transcends the individual synthesis of each sacred writer. Even the totality of the explicit synthesis of all the sacred writers together (a totality which forms the real object of what is known as 'biblical theology' as against exegesis) is transcended by the divinity of the word that even in scripture is expressed only in a human way and therefore always has a prophetic openness, the meaning of which can only gradually be approached through the life of the history of the church.

Although it was spoken only as a human word, the divinity of this word forms the basis of the *sensus plenior* of the scriptural *sensus literalis,* or rather, it is identical with it. This explains why it is necessary in every case to see the *sensus plenior* as a direct extension of the *sensus literalis* of the philological and literary [205] exegetical method. If there is any division between these two *sensus,* then what we have is no longer a *sensus plenior,* but possibly a typological *sensus* (in the broadest meaning) or even a *sensus accommodatitius,* an adaptation of a biblical word. This is a necessary consequence of the very structure of this word, which is divine, but presented to us in the mode of a human word. Just as Christ is God even in his humanity, and is consequently God in a human manner, so too is the word of scripture theandric, and the human meaning of scripture which can be recognised by the exegete is human precisely in its divinity. This human word contains something extra, an objective dynamism. We can only with great difficulty become aware of the meaning of this in the church. It is only through the light of faith that we have any spiritual affinity with the divinity of this word. On the basis of this living contact with the reality itself of faith and not simply with the biblical word about this saving reality, we can, for example, read a deeper meaning, which is probably not exegetical in the christian sense, into Mary's presence at the crucifixion and in the cenacle. It is in this way possible to find evidence in the scriptural texts that, although the writers of the New Testament were themselves ignorant of the later dogmas in the explicit

form given to them by the church, there is a certain objective dynamism in their writings that points in an obscure manner to what later on was heard clearly and explicitly by the church as the word of God. To keep to the same example, when we see in holy scripture how clearly Mary is viewed as a figure of the church in the Book of Revelation and in the fourth gospel, to such an extent that even what is primarily intended, namely 'Lady Church', merges into one single
[206] image with 'Lady Mary'; when we go on to establish that even in the gospel of the infancy the Old-Testament themes of the indwelling of God in the people of God, in the church of the Old Testament, form the prism through which the reality of 'Mary, the mother of Jesus' was seen, then it becomes clear to the christian exegete and the dogmatic theologian that the distance between the church's dogmas on Mary and the gospel image of her is certainly not so great as had hitherto been believed. The very fact alone that the central idea of God's eschatological indwelling in the 'daughter of Zion' and in the holy city of Jerusalem was taken over by the New Testament and applied to Mary, often in a confused and allusory way, makes these scriptural affirmations to our Lady, which at first sight seem very simple, point to deeper meanings that only became clearly conscious in the mind of the church with the passage of time.

It should also be clear from the same example that this objective dynamism of the scriptural sense—the so-called *sensus plenior*—is really a scriptural sense and not a *sensus consequens,* or conclusion drawn from scriptural meanings. The fact that certain characteristics of the 'daughter of Zion' were taken over and applied to Mary and that others were not—that the church was, in the words, selective—shows that the church was determined in this very selective process by the objective dynamism really present in scripture as the expression of the divinity of the scriptural human word. The dogmas of the church are formally not theological conclusions drawn from New-Testament data—they are not a *sensus consequens* (which *as such* cannot be called a sense of scripture). They have rather an intimate connection with the *sensus plenior* of scripture—they are
[207] explications of something that was already vaguely present in the apostolic consciousness (of which scripture is the written expression). Within the church's life of faith and protected by her teaching authority, theological thought has an irreplaceable function to fulfil in connection with this explication. This gives rise to the impression that the church's dogmas should belong to the *sensus consequens*. This, however, is the result of a misunderstanding of the psychological structure of human reasoning. Psychologically speaking, discursive thought is simply the totality of experiential knowledge, in other words, constantly growing experience, but as controlled by the total object that is also implicitly conscious from the very beginning. In explicit reasoning, the original datum is seen in the light of the implications discovered by experiential knowledge and by reflection. These implications then emerge as

conclusions, but they were nonetheless present in the consciousness from the very beginning, although unobserved. This also applies to the knowledge of faith, although this is a knowledge through being addressed. If this were not so, then the fact that the so-called 'new truth', that is, the dogma, has really been formally revealed by God and is therefore to be accepted on his authority would not be recognised. A *locutio attestans,* a divine testimony, is of its very nature also a call to man to react actively, to listen to the definite content of what God communicates to him, a summons to obedience in faith. What was formally revealed must already have been heard, in one way or another, in apostolic times. The appeal that is present as such in the divine testimony can never be an invitation to draw conclusions. It is rather an *invitatio ad credendum,* a call to faith.[13] It necessarily follows from the closing of the deposit of faith that [208]
the true developments of faith, the later dogmas, must from the beginning have been present in God's speaking testimony which invites us to believe. The christian *kerygma* was after all not only addressed to men in apostolic times. It is also addressed to men of all times, and in such a way that this originally-heard *kerygma* has to be translated again and again into statements that will relate what is heard to the constantly changing spiritual situation of man. In view of this, it is a priori to be expected that revelation will testify to certain aspects formally, but only by means of suggestions, with the result that the church will only become aware of these as formally attested by God when a new problem arises. An inadequate example drawn from the secular sphere may help to make this clear. In an examination, if the teacher wants to lead the student to the answer that the student simply cannot find, he suggests the answer without directly communicating it, although he formally intends to communicate what he has suggested. What is explicitly communicated—in which the real intention of the teacher is only suggested—is the means by which the student may remember the truths intended. The case is quite different when the student establishes, by his own reasoning from a truth formally intended by the teacher, a different truth—one that was not in any way intended by the teacher, but that is consistently related to the truth intended by him. There is an element of discursive thought in both cases, but they are quite different from each other.

Something similar occurs in the case of revelation. Theological reasoning may well play a part in it and may even be necessary, but only reaction in faith [209]
of the whole community to this truth disclosed by conclusion can determine whether it was really revealed by God, and ultimately only the teaching authority of the church is competent infallibly to guarantee the authenticity of this reaction on the part of the believing community. In this way, later dogmas,

[13] See E. Dhanis, 'Révélation explicite et implicite', *Greg* 34 (1953), 187-237; see also part 1, chapter 4: 'The development of the apostolic faith into the dogma of the church', on pp. [63-92] above.

occasioned by many different causes which direct and stimulate, perhaps over the course of centuries, the attention of the reaction in faith of the community, really come from the deposit of faith to which scripture testifies.[14] When God let the sacred writers see Mary, for example, via the unheard-of characteristics of the ideal 'daughter of Zion' (an ideal that was never fulfilled in Israel), then he formally *suggested* the later marian dogmas in these essential characteristics, of which the apostolic church was aware, and thus revealed them *formally* and not simply virtually.

[210] The same principle that the word of scripture is divine in the mode of the human, historically-conditioned word enables us also to throw light on the *sensus plenior* of Old-Testament texts. These texts have no immediate 'christian' meaning. Their strict meaning is for the Jewish people itself. When, however, we situate these texts within the whole context of the plan of salvation that was fulfilled in Christ, and consequently realise that the first word of the Old Testament acquires its full and definitive meaning from what was accomplished in Christ and what the New Testament had to tell us about this, then it becomes evident that the Old-Testament *sensus literalis* is at the same time borne up by an 'objective dynamism' which points, via the strictly Jewish meaning, to the Christ who was to come. Christ himself said:

> Everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled. [Lk 24:44.]

Scripture refers to an 'opening of the mind' to understand the writings of the Old Testament (Lk 24:45). What was written in the Old Testament is, without prejudice to its independent, strictly Old-Testament meaning, ultimately written for us christians, as the first letter of Peter says (1 Pet 1:10-12). We, christians, with unveiled face behold in the Old Testament the glory of the Lord (2 Cor 3:14ff.). It is true—throughout the history of the church, christians have looked far less for the *sensus plenior* than, with patristic and medieval exuberance worthy of a Claudel, for typological meanings of all kinds of Old-Testament events. But the fact of abuse does not prevent proper use, and

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[14] It therefore seems to me to be theologically impossible to support the opinion of those who, faced with the imminent dogma of the Immaculate Conception, asserted that there was no need for this dogma to be either explicitly or implicitly present in scripture, and even that there was no need for it to be present in any way in tradition. In connection with these tendencies, see V. Sardi, 'Breve esponsizione degli Atti della commissione speziale', *La solenne definizione del dogma dell' Immacolata Concepimento di Maria Santissima: Atti e Documenti,* Rome, 1904-5, part 1, 792. This proposition is indisputably true in that we are apologetically in no way able to point to the dogmas of the church through tradition, from scripture down to the present time. This is quite impossible. But it is certainly necessary to be able to demonstrate in one way or another, because no new revelations are made to the church, that the later dogmas come from the closed *depositum fidei* and are not added to it. The explicit continuity cannot be demonstrated, but there is more in human psychology than simply 'explicit knowledge'.

scripture has continued to be a living book for all believers. After the exile, it was read and re-read in the light of new events and of constantly growing expectations of the Messiah, so that, for example, psalms that were probably [211] written at an earlier period became more messianically explicit by being used as prayers and hymns in the synagogue. The Septuagint translation frequently bears witness to a deeper understanding and interpretation of scripture because of the developed consciousness of faith of Judaism and is therefore a help in tracing the *sensus ptenior*—to such an extent that voices have been raised in recent years in defence of the inspired character of this translation. At a later stage, the same scripture was read by the primitive apostolic church in the light of Christ's incarnation and resurrection from the dead. Finally, we too read the same scripture in the light of the history of salvation of the church which is guided by the same Spirit. There is of course no point in seeking, with medieval artlessness, to find every truth, because it is borne up by the Spirit who is also the Spirit of scripture, in holy scripture: 'omne verum dictum est sensus Sacrae Scripturae' ('every true statement is of the sense of holy scripture')[15]. It is only when the christological (or mariological) meaning is a direct extension of the real literal sense of scripture, of a kind that can be established by exegesis, that we may speak of a *sensus plenior* or of a christological (or mariological) meaning of an Old-Testament text.

4. BIBLICAL THEOLOGY: THE POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR DOGMATIC THEOLOGY

It will be clear from the foregoing that it is a constant duty for the dogmatic theologian, as it was for the apostolic church, to re-read scripture retrospect- [212] tively, assuming the results of christian exegesis. As Aquinas correctly observed, 'Even the true prophets did not perceive everything that the Holy Spirit intended in their visions, words, and actions.'[16] The divinity of this inspired human word can only be made fully and explicitly conscious in and through the life of the church under the guidance and protection of the church's teaching authority that acts as the instrument of the Holy Spirit who spoke through the prophets. According to the New Testament, and especially the gospels of John and Luke, the Holy Spirit was sent partly in order to give the church a christian understanding of scripture. The Acts testify to this deeper insight in the case of Peter, Stephen, Philip, and Paul after Pentecost, when they 'spoke', full of the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:8; see also Acts 6:5; 7:55; etc.). For the

[15] See C. Spicq, *Esquisse d'une histoire de l'exégèse au Moyen-Age*, Paris, 1944; H. de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale: Les quatre sens de l'Ecriture*, Paris, 1959 (parts I and 2) and 1961 (part 3).
[16] *ST* II-II, q. 173, a. 4.

dogmatic theologian, scripture is not just one of the many documents that he has to study. It has for him as well a unique, primary and irreducible meaning. It is true that christians receive the word of God from the church, but in so doing they receive the word of God to which scripture testifies. Biblical and dogmatic theology cannot be set against each other, even though each has a different way of viewing things directly. The church, tradition, subject to the guidance of the Spirit, can only suggest to us what Christ himself has said and done and what he was when he was still on earth. And this is an event to which the apostolic *kerygma,* as this comes directly to us in holy scripture, bears immediate witness. Just as the post-apostolic church is built on the authority of the apostles, the sacraments, and the proclamation of the faith, so too is it built
[213] on holy scripture, which stands on the altar next to the chalice in the form of a missal. At one time, anti-protestant tendencies in the church made it seem as though the vital significance of the christian reading of scripture was pernicious. That time is, however, past, and as a consequence of this dogmatic theology has in recent years acquired a fresher and more authentic character. Because it is a testimony about the origin of the reality which we call in theology 'tradition', scripture is really the *caput divinae traditionis* ('source of divine tradition'). The church does not derive its dogmas from theological conclusions drawn from scripture, but it recognises its own living dogma in scripture. Congar was therefore right when he said:

> I respect and I never cease to study the science of the exegetes, but I challenge their supreme authority.[17]

Christian exegesis does not have the last word to say on the subject of revelation. Although this comes to us through the medium of the history of salvation of the Old and the New Testaments and the inspired testimony about this, it is after all directed to all men at all times. What believing humanity, guided by the Spirit working in the church, personally makes its own of this revelation can differ, at the explicit level, from what holy scripture has explicitly made its own. But the scriptural expressions continue to be expressions of the same faith that the church now confesses. There is therefore, at the explicit level, an acquisition, in the course of the history of the church, in comparison with scripture, viewed in its explicit character. In this acquisition and progress, dogmatic theology plays a subordinate part which cannot and may not be left
[214] exclusively to christian exegesis and biblical theology. On the other hand, however, the exegete has, as I have already said, a critical function with regard to dogmatic theology, because it is he who studies the origin and beginning guaranteed by God and the tendency first set in motion by God which, because

[17] Y. Congar, *Vraie et fausse réforme dans l'Eglise*, Paris, 1950, 498-9.

of its original direction, is bound always to have an authoritative critical function with regard to the further course of the movement. In this sense, we may with Rahner call scripture the *hegemonikon* (i.e. critical ruling principle) of dogmatic theology.[18]

Let me conclude by saying, in the light of this brief argument, that dogmatic theologians frequently draw both too much and too little from scripture, for the simple reason that they only consult it in order to find evidence for really or supposedly established theological theses. They ought instead, proceeding from the starting-point of faith, to follow and to experience themselves at close quarters the movement from the Old to the New Testament. They ought also to follow personally the searching tendency of the early apostolic church which approached the christian mystery of salvation from the Old-Testament themes in the light of the incarnation, and at the same time let itself be absorbed in this tendency of *fides quaerens intellectum,* of faith searching for understanding, for which the New Testament itself so clearly provides us with the example.

[18] K. Rahner, 'Biblische Theologie', *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche,* part 2, Freiburg, 1958², cols. 449-51.

Chapter 7

THE PLACE OF THE CHURCH FATHERS IN THEOLOGY

Already by the time of the rabbinical writings there was constant reference to the 'tradition of the fathers'. This meant that the law, interpreted and expounded by different generations of teachers, was handed down to the living generation. The idea of the 'elders' was echoed in the word 'fathers'. In the ancient world, a teacher was usually called 'father' and his pupil or disciple 'son'.[1] The christian teachers were also automatically called 'fathers' in the patristic period. To begin with, this title had no special meaning. In the fourth century, however, this typically christian concept of 'father' developed until it had a clearly defined meaning, and this growth went together with the development of the idea of the 'tradition of the church'. It was in this century that a very clear distinction was made between scripture or the apostolic *kerygma* and the 'tradition of the fathers'. In its content, tradition is the same as the apostolic teaching. This was called 'tradition' insofar as it had not come directly to the generation living at the time in holy scripture, but had been passed on 'from hand to hand' by previous generations—with their own [216] elucidations but nonetheless with the original inheritance faithfully preserved —to the subsequent generations. Thus the *traditio patrum* was the 'tradition of the older generations'. The subject of the teaching church was, however, the college of bishops. Tradition was therefore even earlier—for Irenaeus, for example—than the apostolic *kerygma* itself, insofar as this was preserved and passed on (in a mature, but at the same time in an essentially unchanged, form) to the living generation of men via the links in the chain of successive bishops.

The technical term *church father* came about for the first time in the fourth century as a result of this view. Christians were by this time already removed by a distance of several centuries from the immediate witness of the apostles. From the time of Athanasius onwards, it was therefore becoming less common

[1] See, for example, 1 Cor 4:5; 1 Pet 5:13; and Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* IV, 41,2.

to refer directly to scripture and more common to refer directly to the 'authority of the fathers'. There was a firm conviction of the responsibility of the episcopate in each generation for the 'received doctrine' which, after having been clarified in the light of contemporary problems, was handed down to the next generation. The fathers, that is, the teaching bishops of previous generations, formed the link between the apostolic faith and the latter generations.

This was, then, the patristic idea of 'father of the church'. The 'fathers' were in this case quite concretely defined. As far as the local churches were concerned, they were the founders of those churches.[2] As far as each individual christian was concerned, the father was the 'baptising bishop' by whom he was
[217] initiated into the mysteries of salvation.[3] Thus two streams of faith came about—'inspired scripture' and the 'tradition of the fathers'.[4] Together with scripture, the fathers formed the norm of faith.[5] The legitimacy and truth of a proposed new doctrine was tested against its conformity with the doctrine of the earlier fathers. The very fact that these fathers held a different opinion was sufficient (at least at the time of Athanasius) for the proposed new doctrine to be condemned.[6] The authority of the fathers was decisive.[7]

The bishops of the local churches who enabled christians to live from the apostolic faith by their teaching, especially in connection with the christian initiation, but also on other occasions, were therefore regarded in the fourth century as fathers of the church whose teaching was, with scripture, normative for the christian faith. The normative principle that already held good in the fourth century and was a guiding thought in the great councils of the fifth century (the idea that what was 'patristic' was apostolic) shows that in those days the concept *Father of the church* was really formulation of what we now call the 'living tradition of the church', at least insofar as this is formally vested in the college of bishops. This explains why one of the essential elements in the modern concept *father of the church* is 'approval by the church'.

[218] Nonetheless, the idea of 'father of the church' was enlarged even in the patristic period, especially in the west (Augustine, Jerome, Vincent of Lérins), to include all ecclesiastical writers, even if they were not bishops. All christian writers therefore came to be regarded as fathers of the church insofar as they were representative of the church's tradition of faith.

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[2] Basil, *Epist.* 210, 3 *(PG* 32, 772).

[3] Basil, Epist. 204, 2 (PG 32, 746).

[4] *Epist.* 5, 3 (ed. Pasquali, p. 90).

[5] Cyril, *De recta fide ad reg.* 2 (PG 76, 1204); *Epist.* 39 (*PG* 77,177).

[6] Athanasius, *Contra Apoll.* I, 20 *(PG* 26, 1128); *Ad Serap.* I, 28 *(PG* 26, 593-4); *Contra Arian.* I, 8 *(PG* 26, 28); I, 3 (*PG* 26,17).

[7] See also Basil, *Hom. c. Sab.* 4, 5 (*PG* 31, 609, 642); *De Spiritu Sancto* X, 25 (*PG* 32,112).

In his *Commonitorium* (chapter 41), Vincent of Lérins formulated this in the following way:

> Whenever a new question arises to which no answer has yet been given, reference must be made to the views of the holy fathers, to those who, each in his own time and place and in the unity of faith and the community, were tried and tested teachers [*magistri probabiles*]. And everything that they have held, one in spirit and in consent, must without any doubt or scruple be regarded as the true and catholic teaching of the church.

As time passes, the links between the early apostolic *kerygma* and the living generations in the church become more numerous. The concept *father of the church* is thus bound to include more generations than those of the time before the fourth century. In itself, then, the 'fatherhood' of the church could be as long in duration as the apostolic succession, which originally meant more or less the same as the concept *church father.* In later centuries, however, a limit was set to the extent in time of the idea of father of the church, and the name *church father* was reserved for those who were closest in time to the apostolic church. *Antiquitas,* or the fact that they were active in the period of christian antiquity, thus became one of the essential characteristics of the church fathers. The patristic period was regarded, more or less correctly, to have ended with John Damascene (749) in the east and with Isidore of Seville (636) in the west. Aquinas called these fathers the *sancti;* their works had an 'authentic' value, whereas the later *theologians* were only called *magistri,* and their works had no [219] decisive authority *(robur auctoritatis).*[8] This change is, in my opinion, partly connected with the historical fact that theology came, with the passage of time, to be less and less directly the concern of the bishops themselves, because of their increasing administrative activities. This gave rise to the so-called 'theological argument', dissociated from the teaching function of the hierarchical church, and this argument ipso facto acquired a value which was different from the *patristic* 'theological arguments'. It was perhaps this change which determined the somewhat arbitrary limit set to the period of the church fathers.

In the technical language of the church, then, the word *church father* acquired a classic, clearly defined, and permanent meaning, which may be recognised by four essential characteristics.

1. *Christian antiquity.* The fathers of the church are representatives of christian antiquity—they formed the first link between the apostolic period and later periods, and they are for this reason accorded a position of special privilege.

[8] See M.-D. Chenu, 'Authentica et magistralia', *DTP* 38 (1925) 3-51.

This qualification might in itself seem arbitrary, like the limits that mark off the patristic period, but a very profound idea is in fact contained in it. The fathers were the first christian writers to attempt, after the closing of revelation, to solve the problems brought about by the confrontation between the apostolic *kerygma* and the post-apostolic age by means of theological reflection. They were, in other words, the initiators of the church's theology, of conscious
[220] thought about faith within the church—it was they who laid the foundations of the theological 'faith-in-search-of-understanding' for later generations of christians. They have a special value, then, in that they laid the foundations of theology. As bishops teaching within the church, they cannot be regarded as in any way superior, for example, to the church's hierarchy today.

2. *Orthodoxy in doctrine.* To say that they were orthodox does not mean that individual fathers did not commit error in doctrine. The orthodoxy of the patristic doctrine should rather be seen in their collective testimony of the church's doctrine—the *consensus patrum.* Aquinas called their testimony 'arguments from the proper sources of theology, but with only probable evidence'.[9] The value which is ascribed to them is theirs not as private theologians, but as active witnesses of the living tradition of the church. This brings us to a third characteristic of the fathers.

3. *Explicit or implicit ecclesiastical approval.* 'The authority of the teaching of the catholic teachers is derived from the church. We are therefore bound to place more trust in the church's authority than in that of Augustine, Jerome, or any teacher.'[10] The church fathers drew their doctrine from the church and were witnesses of the apostolic *kerygma* only as representatives of this living tradition. This inner communion with the church is implied in their works, but it is only the church's teaching authority that can give official recognition to this. In fact, this official recognition was also accorded to many individual
[221] church fathers by the church's appointment of some of them as doctors of the church *(doctores ecclesiae).* The term *father of the church* and *doctor of the church* thus coincide only partially. Not all the fathers have been made doctors of the church, and there are also medieval and modern doctors who could be called 'fathers of the church' were it not for the fact that they lack the attribute of 'christian antiquity'. But this characteristic is in fact one of the essential attributes of the concept *father of the church.* The patristic *doctors* of the church are the leading figures among the fathers. The church's universal and implicit regard for the fathers was only given concrete *expression* by the church's raising them to the rank of doctors of the church. Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzen,

[9] *ST* I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2: 'argumenta ex propriis sed probabiliter'.
[10] *ST* II-II, q. 10, a. 12.

and John Chrysostom have been the eastern doctors of the church from the very earliest times, and later Athanasius was also accorded this distinction especially by the western church. Since the eighth century Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory the Great have been regarded as the four great patristic doctors of the western church, and later other fathers have been created doctors of the church. The only factual difference between the fathers of the church and the patristic doctors of the church is that some of the fathers are regarded, because of the clearly universal orthodoxy and the influence of their doctrine in the church, by an 'explicit declaration of the church' (by the pope or the Congregation of Rites) as authentic teachers of the church's life of faith.

4. *Holiness of life.* Only those patristic writers who have from the earliest times been venerated as saints (even if they have not been 'canonised') are regarded as fathers of the church. This is less a question of their personal holiness than of [222] the holiness of their testimony.

Like the church fathers themselves, these characteristics must be seen as a whole. It is not a question of eminent individual figures, but of a single great community, scattered in time, but equally inspired, of greater and lesser personalities, whose voices echo each other so that the whole sounds like one great choir singing in unison. This ensemble alone guarantees the catholic and apostolic nature of their teaching.

For all these reasons, modern theological speculation, in addition to making a fundamental study of scripture, cannot neglect the compelling need to study patristics, as this will always have an authoritative critical function with regard to the solutions that the theologian attempts to provide to contemporary problems.

Chapter 8

THE CREED AND THEOLOGY

In the ancient world, it was the custom to break some object, such as a coin, in half for the purpose of identifying, for example, two partners. Each of the partners would then keep one piece *(tessera).* When these two pieces were placed together *(symballein;* hence *sym-bolon)* at a later date, the partnership could be recognised or proved by this. Thus *symbolum* came to mean a sign of recognition and distinction, and at the same time a sign of unity. In this way, the formulated confession of christian faith came, in the *latinitas africa* (that is, the north-African part of the Latin-speaking world), to be called *symbolum*—a *symbolum* of faith, in other words, a sign of recognition for the members of the same community of faith, and at the same time a sign distinguishing christians from those who did not profess the true faith. This background meaning of the name *symbolum* of faith has been lost today. The *symbolum* is more or less the charter of the catholic confession of faith—a charter that, although it has been accepted almost literally by the non-catholic confessions, has nonetheless been given a different content and meaning by the reformation.

In these official and ecclesiastical *symbola,* creeds, or confessions of faith, two groups can above all be distinguished—the *symbolum apostolicum,* or Apostles' Creed, and the more elaborate conciliar *symbola.* [224]

1. HISTORICAL SURVEY

1. The apostles' creed

From the fourth century[1] until the fifteenth and even the sixteenth century, the view was generally held in the Latin church that the twelve articles of faith had been drawn up personally by the apostles themselves, and called 'apostolic' for that reason. In the course of time, the name of each of the apostles was even

[1] See, for example, Ambrose, *Ep.* 42, 5 (PL 16, 1125).

attached to one of the twelve articles.[2] It was the eastern church that gave the first impetus to reflection about this. Mark of Ephesus observed at the Council of Ferrara and Florence that the eastern church had no idea of any possible apostles' creed.[3] The humanists, and especially Erasmus, stated the problem of the origin of the *symbolum apostolicum* more precisely, although it was only in the last century that really serious research was undertaken into the subject, and that this research grew into a separate scientific study.

In the meantime, the first and altogether too vociferous result of this research, that denied that this *symbolum* had any connection at all with the apostolic age, has already been superseded. It was possible to go back as far as the third century or thereabouts. Before that, everything was in obscurity, but it
[225] was realized that the Apostles' Greed, although it was of a much later date than the apostolic period itself, nonetheless went back to stereotyped confessions of faith which can be found scattered about in scripture. In its content and form, the *symbolum apostolicum* is certainly apostolic, since it is an expression of the apostolic tradition of faith, a great deal of the prehistory of which can be traced until we end up with the known formulae of faith of holy scripture.

1. If we read the Acts of the Apostles listening to the echoes of Peter's[4] and Paul's[5] sermons—echoes which may be regarded as classical patterns for missionary preaching in the apostolic age—we are bound to observe how stereotyped formulae of faith recur again and again in these sermons, concerning the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. We are also certain to be struck by the way in which this central saving fact of Easter is surrounded by similarly stereotyped proclamations of the mysteries that prepared for and were subsequent to the paschal fact. At his baptism, Christ was proclaimed as the Messiah.[6] His public life in signs and miracles[7], his appearance after the resurrection[8], and the descent of the Holy Spirit[9] were also proclaimed. The whole of the redemptive mystery of Christ, expressed always in more or less stereotyped terms which are reminiscent of the later twelve articles of the creed, can be found scattered about in Acts. It is possible to sense the apostolic *kerygma*
[226] and early christian catechetics in these affirmations of Christ's human, davidic, messianic descent[10], his suffering[11] as one rejected[12], his resurrection[13], his

[2] An echo of this tradition can be heard in Aquinas, *3 Sent,* d. 25, q. 1, a. 2; in *ST,* however, he is silent about this legend.
[3] Harduinus, *Conciliorum collectio* IX, 842-3.
[4] Acts 2:14-39; 3:12-26; 4:9-12; 10:34-43.
[5] Acts 8:16-41.
[6] Acts 10:37-8; 13:23-5.
[7] Acts 2:22; 10:38-9.
[8] Acts 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39-42; 8:41.
[9] Acts 2:23; 5:32.
[10] Acts 2:30; 8:33-4.

sitting on the right hand of God[14], the resurrection as the beginning of the messianic age of the *Pneuma* (Spirit)[15], and thus of salvation[16], with the prospect of the Lord's second coming.[17] All this requires on our part repentance and baptism.[18] This unmistakably brings us face to face with the constant bases of the apostolic preaching and confession of faith.

The epistles corroborate this. Similar formulae are to be found throughout them, and these are frequently introduced by a reference to tradition, *paradosis*—'we have received it in this way and we pass it on to you in this way'.[19] What is involved is a *regula fidei,* a standard or norm of faith[20], a *depositum,* a venerable inheritance that must be faithfully guarded[21], a confession of faith.[22] The principal formulae of the later *symbolum,* such as 'who died for us'[23], 'who died and rose again'[24], 'who is at the right hand of God'[25], and 'the Lord of the dead and of the living'[26], are also already to be found here, [227] scattered about in the epistles.

In addition to these already constant kerygmatic formulae, the New Testament also contains confessions of faith of a more official character, as used in preparation for baptism or in liturgical gatherings. The necessary confession of Christ as preparation for baptism especially[27] was given a fairly constant form.[28] Furthermore, standard confessions of faith are to be found in the case of exorcisms, miraculous cures and so on. Characteristic, too, is the confession of faith in times of persecution[29], and generally in liturgical gatherings.[30]

The standard New-Testament confessions of faith are without doubt mainly christological. There are, however, also bipartite confessions in which the

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[11] Acts 3:18.
[12] Acts 4:11.
[13] Acts2:25-31; 13:34-7.
[14] Acts 2:34-5.
[15] Acts 2:17-21.
[16] Acts 2:39; 2:12.
[17] Acts 3:20-1.
[18] Acts 2:38.
[19] See 1 Cor 15: 1ff.
[20] Rom 6:17.
[21] Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1:14.
[22] Heb 4:14.
[23] 1 Thess 5:10; Gal 1:4; 2:20; 2 Cor 5:14; Rom 4:25; etc.
[24] 1 Thess 4:14; Rom 4:25; 8:34; 14:9; etc.
[25] Rom 8:24;Eph 1:20; Heb 1:3-13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22.
[26] Rom 14:9.
[27] See Acts 22:16; 8 -37.
[28] Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; 1 Cor 1:13-15; Mt 19.
[29] I Cor 12:3; Rom 10:9.
[30] I Cor 16:22; Col 3:6; Phil 2:6-11; 4:5; 4:20; 1 Tim 3:16; 1:17; Rom 11:36; 16:27.

Father is mentioned together with the Son, Jesus Christ.[31] It is possible that these bipartite confessions of faith arose because of the preaching of the gospel to the non-Jews, who had to be instructed in monotheism as well as in the mystery of Christ. The New Testament also contains several trinitarian, or at least tripartite, confessions of faith.[32] The addition of the Spirit to the confession of the Father and the Son would seem to have been directly due to the liturgy of
[228] baptism. For the purpose of stressing the connection between the event of Easter and the descent of the Holy Spirit (a confession of faith characteristic of the New Testament), an appeal was perhaps made (by Paul ?) to the experience of baptism. It is, in any case, especially in connection with baptism that the tripartite confessions occur in the writings of Paul.[33] We can therefore say that, in addition to standard christological confessions of faith there are also trinitarian formulae in holy scripture.

2. As a result of these christological and trinitarian confessions of faith in the bible, two separate, established formulae must gradually have become current— a christological and a trinitarian formula. These two formulae, which arose separately from a different original setting in life, grew in the long run together, again in the baptismal liturgy. It is not absolutely clear exactly when this fusion of the two confessions of faith took place. The first traces of it can be found in the second and third centuries, and there is every indication that the fusion was taking place at this time. The fluctuations in this merging process would seem to suggest this. The two schemes of the *symbola* can be found in Justin—these are sometimes separate [34] and sometimes sketchily joined together.[35] In Irenaeus, the fusion is complete, the christological *symbolum* being included at the third confession, that of the Holy Spirit.[36] In Hippolytus' *Traditio apostolica*[37] and in Tertullian[38] we have the first evidence of the definitive fusion,
[229] the christological *symbolum* being inserted as the second member of the trinitarian *symbolum.* This merged *symbolum* of faith was in question-and-answer form, as it was also a *symbolum* of baptism. The real form of confession (the 'creed') is to be found rather later, in Rufinus for example.[39] This

[31] 1 Cor 8:6; 2 Cor 1:3; 11:31; Eph 1:3; Acts 4:24-30; Col 3:16-17; 1 Tim 6:13; 2:5; 2 Tim 4:1; 1 Thess 3:11; 2 Thess 2:16; 1 Pet 4:11; Rev 1:2.
[32] Mt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; Acts 5:29-32; to which may be added Gal 4:4-6; 1 Cor 6:11; 12:4-6; Eph 1:3-14; 2:18; 1 Pet 1:2-12.
[33] 1 Cor 6:11; Eph 4:4-6; and especially Tit 3:4-6.
[34] *Apol.* 1, 13 (*PG* 6, 345, 348); 1, 61 (*PG* 6, 420, 422).
[35] *Apol.* 1, 61 (*PG* 6, 420, 422); 1, 21, 31 (*PG* 6, 360, 376-8).
[36] *Adv. Haer.* 1, 10, 1 (*PG* 7, 549).
[37] Ed. B. Botte, *Sources chrétiennes* 11, Paris 1946, 50-1.
[38] See E. Schillebeeckx, *De sacramentele heilseconomie* I, Antwerp, 1952, 240-1.
[39] Expositio in symbolum (*PL* 21, 335).

is called the 'Roman form'[40] of the apostolic *symbolum.* Since the *Traditio* of Hippolytus is a version of the Roman baptismal liturgy round about the year 215, it is in this *symbolum* of baptism that the oldest preliminary form of the present-day Apostles' Creed is to be found. The scheme itself must be even older, to judge from the allusions to be found in Tertullian, Irenaeus, Justin, and even in Ignatius of Antioch—that is to say, in the first years of the second century. An even older *symbolum* has been found in papyrus from Dêr-Balyzeh in Upper Egypt. This has the same structure in a simpler form as the baptismal *symbolum* of the *Traditio Hyppoliti:*

> I believe in God the almighty father
> and in his only son, our Lord Jesus Christ
> and in the holy spirit
> and in the resurrection of the flesh
> in the holy catholic church.[41]

We may therefore conclude that the basic form of our Apostles' Creed came about towards the end of the second century, and probably in Rome.

3. The present-day text of the *symbolum* of faith that has become classic throughout the whole of the west and that is used in the catechism, at baptism, and at the ordination of priests, can be found for the first time in an *Ordo* [230] *Romanus* of 950. This formulation is known as the *textus receptus.* (i.e, the received text).[42] It does not come from the Roman liturgy, but in all probability from south Gaul. With a few variants, it can be found towards the end of the fourth and in the fifth century. It is substantially present in a *Gelasianum* of the seventh century. It was not until the carlovingian reform that this text was accepted in Rome. A form occupying an intermediate position between the R and the T versions is the Roman *symbolum* (in Greek), which occurs in a letter written in 340 by Marcellus of Ancyra to Pope Julius.[43]

4. We are less well informed about the *symbola* in the east. In broad outline, they have been constructed in much the same way, but they are more exuberant in form and have more details and more mutual variations. Among the fourth-century baptismal *symbola* that are known to us are those from Caesarea in Palestine[44], from Jerusalem[45], from Antioch[46], and so on.

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[40] The *forma Romana,* or R-version, also called the 'forma occidentalis antiquior' ('older western form'), is included in DS 12 (=DR 2a).

[41] DS 2 (=DR 1b).

[42] The T-version, or 'forma occidentalis recentior' ('later western form'), is included in DS 30 (=DR 6).

[43] *PG* 42, 385 and DS 11 (not included in DR). The text is, however, the basis of the rather later *textus receptus* and of all the western *symbola,* and came about in Rome itself.

[44] DS 40 (not included in DR).

Conclusion

Although the classic *symbolum* of faith was not formulated by the apostles themselves, it may nonetheless correctly be called 'apostolic'. It is really a *regula* of the apostolic faith, and faithfully reflects the main themes of the apostolic
[231] *kerygma,* the apostolic catechesis of candidates for baptism, and the primitive christian confession of faith.

The 'Twelve Articles of Faith' (the T-version) as such have never been officially and solemnly declared dogma by the extraordinary teaching authority of the church. They have, however, always been regarded as a norm of faith, and are held up *as a norm of faith* by the ordinary and universal teaching authority of the church. The Apostles' Creed is really a dogmatic *symbolum* of faith. It is, after all, essentially a *symbolum* of baptism. And here the *lex orandi lex credendi* is fully valid, here the norm of the church's prayer really is the norm of its faith, for the catholic creed is firmly rooted in the church's religious life, and especially in its liturgy.

Although the *symbolum* of faith was a baptismal *symbolum* that had to be confessed by the neophyte, initially on baptism itself and at a later stage as a preparation for baptism, it should not be regarded as the quintessential summary of the whole of christian dogma. It only includes those main truths, a confession of which was required of catechumens. If this is borne in mind, it will be clear why even so essential a reality as the eucharist is not mentioned in it. It contained only the matter of christian initiation. Not even the whole catechesis of baptism was included in it. Lack of knowledge of history, and above all of the prehistory of the apostolic *symbolum,* led theologians of the Middle Ages to regard the *symbolum* as the all-embracing *articulus* (or 'joint') of faith, around which the totality of dogma turned as a necessary assumption or as proceeding essentially from it. It was on the basis of this idea that Aquinas constructed his great synthesis of the *articulus fidei.* Although he was to some
[232] extent restricted by the fact itself of the existing *symbolum,* he was nonetheless able to discover, on this basis, a much deeper idea, namely that a revealed truth of faith is only an 'article' if it possesses a central saving value by means of which light is thrown on other truths of faith.

2. The conciliar *symbola* of faith

Unlike the extremely simple confession of faith of the apostolic *symbolum,* the *symbola* drawn up by the various councils of the church are much more 'scholarly'. Theological terminology found its way into the confession of faith.

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[45] DS 41 (=DR 9).
[46] DS 50 (not included in DR).

These *symbola* were, initially at least, divorced from liturgical experience and were drawn up, on a basis of the apostolic *symbolum,* with anti-heretical intentions in mind. Pre-eminent among these confessions of faith is the *Fides Nicaena,* the symbolum of faith of the Council of Nicea (325).[47] The basis of this *symbolum* was an eastern form of the apostles' creed, that was further elaborated in connection with the heresy which Nicea was combating.

The so-called *Symbolum Nicaeno-Constantinopolitanum*[48] has in fact nothing to do with the Council of Constantinople (381). It is an adaptation in the Nicene style of a current eastern apostolic *symbolum.* From the end of the fourth century onwards, however, this version quickly became generally accepted in the east. It appeared for the first time in the acts of the Council of Chalcedon, where it was called the confession of faith of 'the one hundred and fifty fathers who were assembled in (the Council of) Constantinople'.[49] There is, however, no mention of it anywhere in the acts of the Council of Constantinople. This [233] *symbolum* can already be found in 374 in Epiphanius[50], and it was probably also the baptismal *symbolum* of Jerusalem. This is the confession of faith that is used for the creed in the liturgy of the mass. The practice of including the creed in the mass is derived from the church of Constantinople—in fact, from a monophysite branch of that church, the Patriarch Timothy (511-17) aiming, by this introduction, officially to affirm his orthodoxy. This practice was universally accepted in the east, and we find it in 589 also in Spain, and in the ninth century in the Frankish countries, probably having been introduced by Charlemagne.[51] From here, it gradually spread throughout the whole of the north. When the Emperor Henry II went to Rome in 1014, he was astonished to attend mass in which there was no creed! Benedict VIII conceded to the emperor's demand[52] and in this way a *symbolum* of baptism which was originally eastern found its way in the eleventh century into the Roman mass as well. The same *symbolum* was taken over later by the Council of Trent as a confession of faith[53], and since that time it has been used, together with the Tridentine additions, as the official confession of faith of the clergy.[54] Because it was taken over by the Councils of Chalcedon and Trent, and because it has a

[47] DS 125-6 (=DR 54).
[48] DS 150 (=DR 86).
[49] Mansi VI, 957 and VII, 112; see also J. Lebon, 'Les anciens symboles dans la définition de Chalcédoine', *RHE* 32 (1936), 809-76.
[50] DS 44-5 (=DR 13).
[51] B. Capelle, 'L'origine anti-adoptianiste de notre texte du symbole de la Messe', *RTAM* 1 (1929), 7-20.
[52] *PL* 142, 1060-1.
[53] DS 1500 (=DR 782).
[54] DS 1862-70 (=DR 994-1000).

place in eucharistic worship, this symbolum has an unmistakably dogmatic value.

[234] There are also the great confessions of Chalcedon, in which the christological dogma is formulated[55], and a large number of synodal *symbola,* only a few of which are included in Denzinger.[56] The *symbolum* of the eleventh Council of Toledo[57], in which the doctrine of the Trinity especially is confessed, is certainly an authentic declaration of the dogma, but it was not confirmed by Innocent III, as was earlier believed.[58] Mention must also be made of the *Symbolum pseudo-Athanasianum,* the so-called *Quicumque*.[59] This was originally in Latin and cannot be from Athanasius. Even now, little can be said with certainty about its origin. The liturgical use of this initially individual document is in any case a guarantee of its dogmatic value. It would appear to belong to the same group as the anti-priscillian *symbola* which originated in Spain.[60] The following may also be mentioned: the *symbolum* of Leo IX[61], which was included in a longer whole at the Second Council of Lyons[62]; and the confession of faith imposed on Durand de Osca and the Waldenses.[63]

[235] Several additions were made to the *symbolum* of Trent, to which I have already referred (see p. [233] and *n*. 53 above), by the First Vatican Council[64], and Pius X finally added the anti-modernist oath to it.[65] This oath is not, however, a real *symbolum,* nor is it a confession of faith.

2. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

1. The vision of salvation from which the apostles' creed especially was composed is characteristic—in and through salvation history, beginning with creation and culminating in the man Jesus, the Trinity is revealed in its inner life and as salvation for us. Although it may well be true that the christological *symbola* occur most frequently in scripture, it is quite clear that Cullmann's

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[55] DS 300-3 (DR U8=DS 301-3).
[56] For example, the *symbolum* of the First Synod of Toledo, DS 188-90 (=DR 19-20).
[57] DS 525-41 (=DR 275-87).
[58] See J. Madoz, *Le symbole du XIe concile de Tolede: ses sources, sa date, sa valeur*, Louvain 1938,161-2.
[59] DS 71-6 (=DR 39-40).
[60] For example, the so-called 'Fides Damasi', DS 71-2 (=DR 11-16); the *Clemens Trinitas,* DS 73-4 (=DR 17-18); and the 'Libellus in modum symboli', DS 188-208 (=DR 19-38). Also in K. Künstle, *Anti-priscilliana,* Freiburg 1905, 47, 65-6, and 43-4 respectively.
[61] DS 680-6 (= DR 343-9).
[62] DS 851-4 (=DR 461-4), where it is found as the first part of the longer 'Professio fidei Michaelis Palaeologi imperatoris' (see DS 851-61 =DR 461-6).
[63] DS 790-7 (=DR 420-7).
[64] DR. 1000 *n.* 1 (omitted in DS).
[65] DS 3537-50 (=DR 2145-7).

argument[66], that the transition from the christological to the trinitarian *symbola* implies a post-apostolic shift of emphasis and a mutilation of authentic christianity, must be incorrect. What after all emerges clearly in scripture is that the whole mystery of Christ is indissolubly bound up with the theocentric monotheism of the Old-Testament faith. The entire saving event is seen in the perspective of the providential guidance of life by God, who holds creation, Old-Testament history, and the living mysteries of Christ in his hands. Beginning with creation, all the saving facts which God accomplished in Abel, Enoch, Abraham, and so on, and in Christ, are mentioned in one breath.[67] The Father, who is the creator, is also the source, the author, and the end of the [236] whole history of salvation, which culminates in Christ—'From him and through him and to him are all things.'[68] This theocentric monotheism is seen by the New Testament to be the background to the entire mystery of Christ. 'God [that is, the Father] was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.'[69] And it was in the power of the Holy Spirit that the Father accomplished all this in Christ—Christ was born of the Spirit of God[70]; he was justified by the Spirit[71]; he was called the beloved Son on the descent of the Spirit during his baptism in the Jordan[72]; he did great works through the Spirit of God[73], offered himself on the Cross through the eternal Spirit[74], was raised from the dead by the power of the Spirit of God[75], and was constituted in power by the same Spirit.[76] The God of the covenant, who spoke formerly by the prophets, had now spoken by his Son.[77] It will be clear from the foregoing that the christological confessions of faith in the New Testament are incomprehensible if considered outside the trinitarian context, and that everything stated explicitly in the apostles' creed is what was the fundamental inspiration of the apostolic *kerygma.* In the apostolic *kerygma,* the primitive catechesis, and the apostolic confessions of faith, the *mystery of Christ* is seen fundamentally in the perspective of the all-embracing *mystery of God.* On the other hand, experience of *pneumatic* activities in the [237] earliest church was closely bound up with the *kerygma* of this mystery of Christ. The earliest catechesis associated the sending of the Holy Spirit with the pre-eminently messianic event— that of Christ's resurrection and constitution

[66] O. Cullmann, *The Earliest Christian Confessions*, London, 1949.
[67] Heb 11:3-40; Acts 4:24-7.
[68] Rom 11:36.
[69] 2 Cor 5:19.
[70] Mt. 1:20.
[71] 1 Tim 3:16.
[72] Lk 3:22.
[73] Acts 10:38.
[74] Heb 9:14.
[75] Rom 8:11.
[76] Acts 3:13-15.
[77] Heb 1:1-2.

as Lord.[78] The fundamental early apostolic theme is therefore unmistakably that the Father, because of the resurrection, gave the fullness of the Spirit to Christ, who consequently poured him out over the entire church. What we have, then, is the work of the Trinity in the history of salvation, culminating in Christ, who reveals the Trinity to us as the *Deus salutaris,* the God of salvation. This whole plan—of the Father's saving initiative, realised in history in his Son who became man and completed by the Spirit of sanctification—can already be found unmistakably in Eph 1:3-14.[79] The trinitarian teaching of the apostles was made more explicit by reflection in faith about the mystery of Christ amid pneumatic experiences in the early church.

The same applies in the case of the apostolic *symbolum.* Christ, the pre-existent Son of the Father, sent by the Father in the flesh, taken up into the glory of the Father by the resurrection, but on the basis of his sacrificial death, manifested in this glory by the sanctifying, revealing power of the Spirit who is active in the church, but who formerly spoke by the prophets— this forms the fundamental dogmatic inspiration of the *symbolum apostolicum.* Creation, redemption, and completion—these are the three phases of salvation, brought
[238] about by the triune God or manifested by the work of each of the three persons. Thus the apostolic *symbolum* is also one of the finest examples of the identity existing between the scriptural confession of faith and later development and explication in tradition.[80]

2. A second theological reflection is concerned with the fact that the faith of trust and confidence (the *fides fiducialis)* is in scripture always accompanied by a formulated confession of faith. The personal, existential act of faith, as a fundamental choice, cannot, in other words, be separated from 'dogmatic faith', in which the personal attitude is completely dominated by the objective reality of the revelation that presents itself. This is, however, also true in reverse—the dogmatic confession of faith cannot be isolated from the existential act of faith. This is evident from Mt 8:5-13 (the faith of the centurion), Mt 14:22-33 (the faith of Peter who walked on the water to Jesus), and Heb 11:4-38 (the hymn to faith in God's providential guidance of life). The 'object' of the *symbolum* is not only concerned with things and events, even though these may be saving events, but with Someone—the living God as God for and with us, as this has been most clearly realised in the man Jesus. Within the faith of the church as a family,

[78] Acts 2:33.

[79] As a result of recent studies, this passage has come to be regarded as a hymn, or at least as going back to a hymn that was already in use in public worship: see C. Masson, *L'épître de saint Paul aux Ephésiens,* Neuchâtel and Paris 1953, 148-52.

[80] I cannot analyse here all the various small additions that have been made to the Apostles' Creed throughout the course of time. These have generally occurred in connection with heresies. A good detailed analysis will be found in J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds,* London, 1950.

there is in every confession of the twelve articles of the *symbolum apostolicum* a personal act of faith in the living God. Tradition generally and Aquinas in particular have reflected fundamentally about the meaning of the accusative in the 'credo in unum Deum'.[81] As a 'credo' in the living God, the confession of [239]
Christ is, against the background of the trinitarian confession, ultimately also bound to be, on the basis of the 'forgiveness of sins', a 'credo in vitam aeternam'—a belief in the resurrection of the flesh and in eternal life. I believe in the God of salvation—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—who, through the saving activity of Christ and in the power of the work of sanctification of the Holy Spirit, and all this on the initiative of the Father, is eternal life for man both in body and in soul. This is the lasting basis of every *symbolum of faith,* and the inspiration of all theology.[82]

[81] See *ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 2. See also T. Camelot, 'Credere Deo, credere Deum, credere in Deum', *RSPT* 30 (1941-2), 149-55.

[82] In addition to the works already mentioned, the following have been consulted in connection with this chapter: T. Camelot, 'Les récentes recherches sur le symbole des apôtres et leur portée théologique', *RSR* 39 (1951) *(Mélanges Lebreton* I), 323-38; J. de Ghellinck, *Patristique et moyen-âge,* part 1, Gembloux 1949[2]; C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments,* London 1950; C. H. Dodd, 'Le symbole des apôtres', *LV* n. 2 (1952); M. Meinertz, *Das apostolische Glaubensbekenntnis und das Neue Testament,* Cologne 1946; A. Michel, 'Symboles', *DTC* XIV-2 (1941), cols. 2925-31; P. Schoonenberg, 'De apostolische geloofsbelijdenis in de katholieke kerk', *Geloofsinhoud en geloofsbeleving,* Utrecht and Antwerp 1951, 146-93; Y. Trémel, 'Remarques sur l'expression de la foi trinitaire dans l'église apostolique', *LV* n. 29 (1956), 41-66.

Chapter 9

THE LITURGY AND THEOLOGY

The tradition of faith is borne by the entire living church, although the only judge and immediate norm of this tradition is the hierarchical church. The *fides ecclesiae,* the 'faith of the church', bears its infallibility within itself. The *sensus fidelium,* the sense of faith of the entire believing community, is, however, borne also by the unanimity of faith of the college of bishops in union with the pope. This singleness of mind may be expressed in many different ways. In addition to the universal councils of the church, liturgical prayer, as the official prayer of the church, is one of the most characteristic expressions in which the unanimity of the church's faith—that is, of the faith of both the believers and the hierarchy—can be made external in a truly authentic manner. What is more, dogmatic values are borne by liturgical prayer insofar as this prayer expresses the faith of the entire community of the church, and in this way the liturgy permits us to penetrate into what really pertains to the faith of revelation. This fact is expressed in the formula *lex orandi lex credendi,* that is, in the idea that the prayer of the church is a norm of faith. This and related formulae were already [241] appearing as early as the fifth century[1], and the *doctrine* can already be found in Augustine.[2] Recent popes have made frequent appeals to this dogmatic value of the liturgy.[3]

Liturgical prayer is lived dogma. Before the church is explicitly conscious of a point of faith, it carries the point implicitly, but actually present, with it in its life, one of the most specific expressions of which is liturgical prayer. The church can become more explicitly aware of its deposit of faith by way of its own distinctive manner of praying. Liturgical prayer is one of the expressions of the 'living tradition' of the church insofar as it is the prayer of the church here

[1] See especially Prosper of Aquitaine, *De vocatione omnium gentium* I, 12 *(PL* 51, 664-5); see also *Capitula de gratia et libero arbitrio,* DS 246 (=DR 139), which was collected by Prosper, though wrongly attributed to Pope Celestine.
[2] Augustine, *De dono perseverantiae,* XXIII *(PL* 45, 1031-3).
[3] See Pius XI, *Quas primas, AAS* 17 (1925), 598; *Divini cultus,* DR 2200 (omitted in DS); Pius XII, *Divino afflante Spiritu,* DS 3828 (=part of DR 2293); *Mediator Dei, AAS* 39 (1947), 540-1; *Munificentissimus Deus,* DR 3031 (=DS 3900-2), DR 3032 (omitted in DS), and DR 3033 (=DS 3903-4).

and now. It also forms part of what is known as the 'objectivised tradition' (the remote tradition; sometimes, and incorrectly, also called the 'dead' tradition), insofar as these liturgical prayers may perhaps no longer be in use, but nonetheless testify to (are *monumenta* of) the earlier life of the whole church.

In its inmost essence, the liturgy is a sacramental liturgy—according to a patristic and scholastic definition, the sacraments were 'public confessions of the catholic faith'. The sacraments are acts of worship in which faith is made external. They are, however, even more than this, for both the hierarchy and the
[242] believing community are essentially involved in the sacramental event. However clearly the priestly function in the church is distinguished, according to its own special nature, from the church's teaching function, the sacramental liturgy is nonetheless in principle an act of the church's teaching authority, the exercise of the 'ordinary and universal teaching authority' that is implied in the priestly function of the church. We may go even further, for a dogmatic declaration, as an act of the church's 'extraordinary teaching authority', acquires—as was clear, for example, in the definition in 1950 of the dogma of Mary's assumption into heaven—an explicitly cultic and liturgical character. There is no academic instruction of dogma in the liturgical life of faith. The liturgy is the prayerful active experience of the church's universal unanimity of faith, in which the 'teaching church' coincides with the entire community of believers practising the faith.[4] The liturgy brings dogma into the hearts of the faithful.[5] It will therefore be clear that the liturgy, as borne by the whole of the church's community of faith—by the sense of faith, that is, both of the teaching and of the believing church, not simply at one definite period, but in continuous confession[6]—is an exceptional manifestation of the dogmatic faith of the church. The liturgy is dogma itself in its liturgical confession and is therefore a place where theology can find its 'material'.

All the same, we must be careful to emphasise, in affirming the *lex orandi lex credendi,* the primacy of the objective reality of the dogma which is actively
[243] experienced in the liturgy. This is important because the *lex orandi* was, for example, wrongly used by the modernists, who held the view that the liturgy gave rise to dogma.[7] That is why Pius XII stressed, in *Mediator Dei,* the fact that liturgical prayer is only a *manifestation* of dogma. We must also never cease to be aware of the fact that the liturgy, although an important source of this manifestation of faith, is certainly not its only source, and that it is above all a

[4] The bull *Munificentissimus Deus,* in which the assumption of Mary was declared a dogma, refers in this connection to the *fides pastorum et christifidelium* ('the faith of the hierarchy and of Christian faithful'). See DR 3032 (omitted in DS).
[5] See Pius XI, *Quas primas, AAS* 17 (1925), 598.
[6] See Pius XII, *Mediator Dei, AAS* 39 (1947), 540.
[7] See G. Tyrrell, *Lex orandi, or Prayer and Creed*, London, 1903.

place where sacramental theology and the theology of the christian life of the spirit can find their data. In this sense, this traditional liturgical argument coincides with what Aquinas called the *consuetudo ecclesiae* ('practice of the church'), which was, in his opinion, more important in resolving theological questions than the doctrine of theologians or even of the church fathers[8], because liturgical practice is the most characteristic manifestation within the church of the church's faith, together with the church's explicit and solemn declarations of dogma. It goes, however, without saying that liturgical prayers are not composed with the same degree of precision as a dogmatic or a theological definition of faith and that theological reasoning based on the liturgy must consequently be handled very critically.

I am also bound to mention briefly in passing that dogma and liturgy are constantly acting and reacting on each other and that, as *Mediator Dei* points out[9], a deeper knowledge of faith does not of itself bring about a development in liturgical rites. This means that we cannot use the much vaguer or even [244] undefined character of ancient liturgical formulae, which were the manifestation of a faith that had still not become perfectly and consciously explicit, to testify against later dogmas which may perhaps have been more precisely defined outside the liturgy. In this connection, the encyclical *Mediator Dei* referred to the incongruity of an 'unsound archeologism'.[10] Finally, it should be pointed out that the liturgy is a de facto catechesis of faith, and that the most effective catechetical form for modern man, with his distinctive psychological formation, is one that is liturgically inspired. The *lex orandi lex credendi* is manifested in this as an educational method of dogmatic instruction in faith, and this would also appear to have been very early christian practice.[11]

[8] See part 2, chapter 10: 'Scholasticism and theology', on pp. [245-84] below.
[9] *AAS* 39 (1947), 542.
[10] *AAS* 39 (1947), 542 and 546.
[11] In addition to the works already cited, the following have also been consulted: R. Aubert, 'Liturgie et magistère ordinaire', *QLP* 33 (1952), 5-16; J. Brinktrine, 'Der dogmatische Beweis aus der Liturgie', *Scientia Sacra* (Theologische Festgabe Kard. Schulte), Cologne and Düsseldorf, 1935, 231-51; J. Brinktrine, 'Die Liturgie als dogmatische Erkenntnisquelle', *EL* 43 (1929), 44-51; K. Federer, *Liturgie und Glaube* (Paradosis IV), Fribourg 1950; H. Schmidt, 'Lex orandi lex credendi in recentioribus documentis pontificiis', *Prd* 40 (1951), 5-28.

Chapter 10

SCHOLASTICISM AND THEOLOGY

The theologically fertile preliminary research of the twelfth century was synthesised and systematised in the thirteenth. I propose to select here two problems from this scholastic synthesis. Firstly, I shall examine the problem of the 'sources of theology', a problem that was thoroughly investigated by Aquinas especially. Secondly, I shall go into the question as to whether theology, according to the medieval schoolmen, ought first and foremost to examine the truth of the content of faith, or whether it should above all be concerned to reveal its relevance for the christian life.

1. THE SOURCES OF THEOLOGY ACCORDING TO AQUINAS

Introduction

At present, the problem of the *loci theologi*, or the sources of theology, exactly coincides with that of tradition, but this has not always been the case. In the sixteenth century, Melchior Cano elaborated his classic treatise *De locis theologicis* on a basis of medieval theology. Within this framework, the problem of tradition was treated as a function of speculative, discursive theology. This [246]
development was, however, not an extension of the aristotelian concept of *locus,* as Gardeil mistakenly believed[1], but, as Lang has pointed out[2], an extension of the humanist concept of *locus,* as elaborated by Rudolph Agricola, who drew his inspiration in this case from Cicero. *Locus (topos,* or 'place') does not here mean the 'premisses of a dialectical syllogism' (Aristotle) which, in later scholasticism, were identified with the 'principles' of theology as a *scientia* in the aristotelian sense, but rather a 'place where something is found'. In humanism, the *loci* stood in practice for mnemonic key-words, main themes, general schemes, and aids to the collection of material, and were used especially by orators (hence the phrase *locus communis,* a 'commonplace'). This

[1] A. Gardeil, *La notion du lieu théologique*, Paris, 1908.
[2] A. Lang, *Die loci theological des M. Cano und die Methode des dogmatischen Beweises*, Munich, 1925

soon became fashionable in all the sciences, and *loci* were compiled for each of them, so that the notions and the most important points of view and schemes with which the science in question had to work were already in the possession of whoever had to deal with a specific scientific problem. In this way, various 'topics' came about—juridical, medical, historical, and so on. This practice was applied by Melchior Cano to theology, and the so-called 'theological topic' came into existence. This topic provided a list and an explanation of the places where theology could look for the arguments it needed in order to throw light on a mystery of faith, to establish theological conclusions, to refute false theories, and so on. The theologian could find in these places the 'principles of theology' which had to function in the discursive theology of the scholastic
[247] period as the premisses of the theological syllogism. Cano's aim here was above all to examine the theological value of the various places. The theological topic therefore developed into a definite theological treatise dealing with the cogency—and especially with the *auctoritas*— of the data drawn from scripture, the church fathers, theologians, and other sources.[3]

Cano gave to this treatise of the theological topic the tenfold division which has since become classic in theology. First of all, he distinguished those *loci* which form an indispensable element in the constitution of revelation: namely, (1) holy scripture, and (2) unwritten tradition. Then he distinguished those *loci theologici* which provide an interpretation of revelation: (3) the universal church, (4) the general councils of the church, (5) the pope, (6) the church fathers, and (7) the *scholastici* (theologians and canonists). Finally, he distinguished the *loci alieni,* which are not really *places* where theology can find this data, so much as ancillary sources which are of use in theological reflection. These are: (8) human reason, (9) philosophical ideas, and (10) the history of mankind.

These ten *loci theologici* provided the traditional theology of the manuals with its classic form of argument—'proof from scripture', 'proof from tradition', and 'proof from human reason'. In this context, 'tradition' refers to the *loci theologici* of the second group (that is, numbers 3 to 7). The problem of the *loci theologici* was studied in the whole of this context less for the purpose of ascertaining what was the real norm of faith than for the purpose of establishing what method of argument was appropriate to theology as a science in the aristotelian sense. This sixteenth-century treatise of Melchior Cano, *De*
[248] *locis theologicis,* was a concrete growth from something that was already present in embryo in Aquinas (*ST* I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2), but in a more elastic and less formal way. I shall now analyse this medieval situation.

[3] See the more speculative work of E. Marcotte, *La nature de la théologie d'après M. Cano,* Ottawa, 1949.

Thomas discussed the 'argument of authority' or *auctoritas* in theology in the *Summa Theologiae* (I, q. 1, a. 8, c. and ad 2).

The word *auctoritas* had various meanings in the Middle Ages.[4] It was used in the first place to denote the quality that entitled a person such as a priest, a writer, a witness, or a superior, to be taken on trust. By metonymy, therefore, it came to mean the person who was thus qualified, and consequently the writing, the testimony, or some dictum of that person as something trustworthy. Finally, it came to mean the text itself, so that the quotation from a writer was the *auctoritas* or the *dictum auctoritatis. Auctoritas* thus coincided in meaning with 'quotation'.

Thinking from the starting-point of an *auctoritas* is, of course, something that is, as far as theology is concerned, quite self-evident, in view of the fact that theology operates on a basis of revealed data which are in turn founded on the authority of God. The entire technique of thinking that was universally current in the Middle Ages must, however, also be taken into account here. All teaching in the Middle Ages, even instruction in non-theological subjects, was based on a definite text of a certain writer, and this constituted the *auctoritas* in the subject in question. The fundamental subordination to the authority of revelation which characterised the whole of medieval society also had an influence on medieval thought at the secular level—or at least we may say that this christian [249] attitude affected the general outlook of medieval man to such an extent that, if a new idea or tendency in any sphere was to stand any chance of success, it was automatically promoted under the cover of some *auctoritas.* This universal reverence for *auctoritas* resulted, in the sphere of theology, in scientific work being regarded primarily as a commentary on holy scripture, an exegesis of the text *(expositio textus),* and eventually as a commentary on this commentary and these glosses on scripture, which continued to function as the basic text. This entire body of work thus became known as 'holy scripture', 'holy writ', and 'sacred doctrine' (*sacra scriptura, sacra pagina, sacra doctrina*), even when an independent theology had eventually developed from the *quaestio* which came about as a result of discrepancies in these *expositiones.* This in the long run led to the question being explicitly asked about the degree of *auctoritas* of the various levels that had been included in this *sacra doctrina* throughout the course of time. Aquinas has appraised these *auctoritates,* at least schematically, in his *Summa.*[5] Because medieval thought was so conditioned by the idea of authority, the *auctoritates* (quotations) naturally tended to play a many-sided role in the theological thought of the Middle Ages. Although even more distinctions can probably be made, it is nonetheless possible to distinguish three fundamental

[4] See M. D. Chenu, '"Authentica" et "Magistralia"', *DTP* 28 (1925), 3-31.
[5] *ST* I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 3.

ways in which these *auctoritates* were used in medieval theology: (1) the *auctoritas* as a spontaneous means of expression of thought as conditioned by authority, as a 'thinking in biblical quotations'; (2) the *auctoritas-quaestio;* and (3) the *auctoritas-argumentum.*

[250]

1. 'Auctoritas' as 'thinking in biblical quotations'

Like the fathers of the church, the medieval theologians thought and expressed themselves in biblical language. Bardy and Geenen (see the bibliography on pp. [265-6] below) called these *auctoritates* 'quotations for ornament pure and simple', but they were in fact much more than this. This usage was clearly connected with the medieval view of the meaning of scripture (the *sensus scripturae*):

> Every truth which, with due regard for the context, can be fitted into holy scripture, is a scriptural truth.[6]

It is, of course, true that these *auctoritates* can be left out without any detriment to the line of reasoning, and they were therefore, in this sense, 'ornamental'. But the problem goes deeper than this—the reasoning itself was expressed in biblical quotations. The medieval theologians thought to such an extent in patristic and biblical terms that certain formulae were preserved intact and apparently functioned as implicit quotations, whereas they in fact referred to something very different. Fundamentally, they were really no longer simply quotations, but a characteristic mode of thought in formulae drawn from scripture and the church fathers:

> Speaking about God, we should not lightly abandon the language of holy scripture.[7]

2. 'Auctoritas-quaestio'

Differences of opinion among the fathers were so often revealed in the patristic
[251] anthologies that a given text or *auctoritas* within the framework of the 'yes-or-no' *(sic-et-non)* method could give rise to a problem *(quaestio).* In this context, however, we must bear in mind that as yet no clear distinction was made in medieval theology between holy scripture itself, the fathers' commentaries on it *(expositiones S. Scripturae),* and their writings and statements in general *(dicta sanctorum et doctorum).* Aquinas put the question whether

> ... everything that the *doctores sancti* have said is subject to the impulse of the Holy Spirit.

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[6] Aquinas, *Potent.,* q. 4, a. 1.
[7] Aquinas, *CEG* 1: 'de divinis non de facili debet homo aliter loqui quam S. Scriptura loquatur'.

His answer was that

> holy scripture was composed and commented on by the same Spirit,... especially in matters of faith.[8]

Precisely because of the differences among the church fathers, there was no unanimity on this point in the twelfth century. One of the first to make a clearer distinction between the *auctoritas S. Scripturae* and the *auctoritas doctorum* was Rupert of Deutz. The idea gradually gained ground that the fathers were not mutually contradictory, but that there was a difference in their points of view—'non sunt adversi, sed diversi'. The so-called 'equation' of the patristic texts with those of scripture was based on a generally accepted view:

> Every truth, no matter who suggests it, has its origin in the Holy Spirit.[9]
> What is not opposed to holy scripture is a truth of holy scripture.[10]

Aquinas admitted the possibility of error on the part of the fathers, but only in [252]
those truths which did not strictly relate to faith[11], although he did occasionally admit to possible error on their part even in matters of faith[12], or at least in those matters of faith that had not yet been defined by the church. This consequently meant that *argumenta necessaria* (that is, *apodictica)* could not per se be drawn from the fathers.

> Only holy scripture, and not the patristic exposition of scripture, is a compelling norm of faith for us.[13]

Their teaching was nonetheless not to be despised; on the contrary, any discrepancies called for a 'reverent exposition'.[14]

3. 'Auctoritas-argumentum'

An *auctoritas-argumentum* is a quotation that is a source of doctrine, the basis of an expounded doctrine. Aquinas divided the different *auctoritates* into theological categories[15]: 'the *auctoritates* of canonical scripture provide us with proper and apodeictic arguments *(proprie et ex necessitate argumentando)*'; 'the *auctoritates* or the other doctors of the church provide us with undoubtedly

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[8] *Quodl.* 12, q. 17, a. 1.
[9] 'Omne verum a quocumque dicitur, a Spiritu Sancto est'— a statement of Ambrose that was frequently quoted in the thirteenth century.
[10] *Potent,* q. 4, a. 1.
[11] *Quodl.* 12, q. 17, a. 1; *2 Sent.* d. 12, q. 1, a. 2; d. 14, q. 1, a. 2; d. 2, q. 1, a. 3.
[12] *ST* II-II, q. 11, a. 2, ad 3; less explicitly in *Quodl.* 3, q. 4, a. 2.
[13] *Quodl.* 12, q. 17, a. 1: 'dicta expositorum necessitatem non inducunt quod necesse sit eis credere, sed solum Scriptura canonica'. See also *ST* I, q. 1, ad 8, ad 2.
[14] *CEG,* Proem.
[15] *ST* I, q. 1.a. 8, ad 2.

proper, though not apodeictic, but 'probable', arguments *(arguendo ex propriis,*
[253] *sed probabiliter)';* and, finally, 'the *auctoritates* of philosophers are extraneous and only 'probable' arguments *(extranea argumenta et probabilia)'* in theology. In the first place, it should be noted that the terminology used here is derived from an aristotelian context. *Argumentari ex propriis vel ex extraneis* ('argument from proper or extraneous principles') alludes to the scientific procedure in *scientia* (i.e, *epistēmē* in the aristotelian sense), according to which conclusions are drawn from principles by means of discursive reasoning. 'Every science proceeds from its own [principles]'[16], as opposed, that is, to extraneous principles. To appeal in one science to the principles of another science could constitute an unlawful transition from the one *genus subiectum*[17] to the other. The object of theology is 'God-as-God', whereas in philosophy God is not the subject, but the *principium subiecti,* the existential ground of what is formally considered by philosophy. The (analogous) definition of the proper subject of theology —that is, God-as-God, *Deus sub ratione Deitatis*— provides the *principia propria* of this science, and an argument which does not proceed from these therefore appeals to *principia extranea.* Furthermore, the terms *ex necessitate* and *probabilia* are also derived from the same aristotelian conception of science. Again, the word *principia* must be understood in this concept of 'argumentari ex principiis necessariis vel probabilibus' (lit. 'argument from necessary or from probable principles'). The 'necessary principles' give rise to a *syllogismus demonstrativus,* and the 'probable principles' to a *syllogismus dialecticus.* In this
[254] context, 'probable principles' are those truths which are not evident, and which have not been proved, but which are accepted as true 'by all or different or wise persons'.

Aquinas saw an analogy here with the theological 'arguments of authority' as a source of doctrine. *Probabile* had various meanings in the theology of the Middle Ages[18]: (1) everything that is worthy of our approval— this can therefore be 'apodeictic'; (2) everything that can in any way be proved conclusively on the basis of reasoning; and (3), generally speaking, evidence that proceeds not from apodeictic, but from generally accepted, truths, and therefore results in an established opinion—*probabilis* then refers to the good bases of a thesis. Holy scripture, then, because it embraces revelation, provides *argumenta propria et necessaria.* The medieval position is clearly reflected in this article (ST I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2)—in it, Aquinas does not discuss the problem of 'tradition', which did not arise in so pronounced and one-sided a form as it was

[16] *AAP* I, c. 12. lect. 21 (ed, Leonina, n. 2): 'quaelibet scientia ex propriis [principiis] procedit'.
[17] *AAP* I, c. 7, lect. 15; c. 12, lect. 21 (esp. note 7). By *genus subiectum* is meant the proper object of a science considered according to its formal point of view.
[18] See T. Deman, 'Probabilis'. *RSPT,* 22 (1933). 260-90.

to arise at a later period. It is, however, clear from other texts that Aquinas considered proper and apodeictic arguments of authority to be present elsewhere as well. The following is a summary of his doctrine.

a. Places where proper and apodeictic arguments of authority are found

(1) Holy scripture

> Our faith is founded on revelation to the apostles and prophets who have written the canonical books.[19]

Scripture embraces the *principia fidei,* or principles of faith[20], and it would seem [255]
that this principle of scripture was meant to be exclusive.[21] All the same, the *sola scriptura*—the principle of 'scripture alone'—cannot in any sense be called a medieval view. In the first place, *sacra scriptura* (or *sacra pagina*) was less sharply defined in the Middle Ages than it is now:

> By scripture is meant either the canonical bible or the patristic writings.[22]

Furthermore, it is evident from what follows that Aquinas accepted other apodeictic arguments of authority besides scripture.

(2) The apostolic tradition

The *auctoritas* of the apostolic traditions was certainly accepted in the Middle Ages, and especially by Aquinas, even though no conclusive ideas were reached about these traditions at this period. In addition to scripture, Aquinas accepted the authority of the 'teaching of the apostles', and he did not restrict this to the apostolic teaching of scripture alone. Thus, he also accepted the Apostles' Creed in the belief that it had been compiled by the apostles themselves, although we now know that this was historically incorrect. He also made frequent reference, in his sacramental doctrine, to the authority of the *traditio familiaris apostolorum,* the common tradition of the apostles.[23] Despite frequent errors here, due, for example, to the mistaken belief that the Pseudo-Dionysius wrote his work during the apostolic age, what is certainly [256]
quite clear is that he attributed a decisive *auctoritas* to traditions which went back to the apostles themselves.

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[19] *ST* I, q. l,a. 8, ad 2.
[20] *ST* II-II, q. I, a. 5, ad 2.
[21] *ST* III,q. l,a.3.
[22] *1 Sent.,* d. 33, q. 1, a. 5, ob. 3: 'aut enim S. Scriptura dicitur canon bibliae, aut dicta sanctorum'. This is closely connected with the meaning of *S. Scriptura* and S. *Pagina* in the whole of the first question of the *Summa.*
[23] *ST* III, q. 64, a. 2, a. 1; *4 Sent.,* d. 23, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1, ad 1.

(3) The church

> The formal object of faith is the first truth, insofar as this is made known in scripture and in the teaching of the church.[24]

We find the truth of revelation in holy scripture and in the doctrine of the church. Aquinas usually expressed this in a more medieval and a more precise way: 'In holy scripture as the church understands it'[25], thus affirming scripture as the all-important foundation. Aquinas stressed this ecclesiological principle of *auctoritas* even more emphatically than his contemporaries. He held that the arguments of authority drawn from the 'teaching of the church were manifestly *argumenta propria et necessaria,* basing this view on the infallibility of the church[26], and further on the fact that the church was indeed the 'infallible and divine norm'[27] of the fathers' interpretation of scripture, because the fathers' authority was derived from the church.[28] This ecclesial illumination of faith (*manifestatio fidei*) of holy scripture was, in Aquinas' view, to be found: (1) in the
[257] pope ('more trust should be placed in the decisive interpretation of the pope, whose duty it is to define faith, than in the opinion of any other intelligent exegete'[29]); (2) in the councils of the church[30]; and (3) in the life, the liturgy, and the practice of the whole church. The practice of the church enjoyed, in Aquinas' view, a very high authority indeed —an authority unparalleled by anything else, since its practice was guided by the Holy Spirit.[31] It was especially in his sacramental theology that Aquinas appealed to these practices, with the result that he did not, in principle, distort the facts of salvation history in a speculative, a priori framework, but, on the contrary, based his theory on the facts.[32]

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[24] *ST* II-II, q. 5, a. 3.
[25] *ST* II-II, q. 5, a. 3, ad 2; *Carit.,* a. 13, ad 6.
[26] *ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 9, s.c; q. 2, a. 6, ad 3; *Quodl.* 9, q. 8, a. 1; *4 Sent.,* d. 20, q. 1, a. 3.
[27] *ST* II-II, q. 5, a. 3.
[28] *Quodl.* 2, q. 4, a. 3.
[29] *Quodl.* 9, q. 8, a. 1; see *ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 10, and q. 11, a. 2, ad 3.
[30] *Quodl. 9, q.* 8, a. 1, s.c. and ad 2; *ST* I, q. 36, a. 2; II-II, q. 1, a. 9, and a. 10, c. and ad 2; *Potent.,* q. 10, a. 4, ad 13, etc.
[31] *ST* II-II, q. 10, a. 12; in, q. 66, a. 10, s.c.
[32] See, for example, *ST* III, q. 68, a. 8, ob. 2; q. 67, a. 7, ob. 3; q. 71, a. 3, s.c; q. 70, a. 2, s.c; q. 72, a. 4, s.c; q. 72, a. 12, s.c; q. 73, a. 1, s.c; q. 78, a. 2, s.c; q. 78, a. 3, s.c; q. 78, a. 6, s.c; q. 79, a. 7, s.c; q. 80, a. 12, s.c; q. 82, a, 2, s.c; q. 83, a. 2; q. 83, a. 6; q. 85, a. 5; q. 87, a. 1; q. 89, a. 6; etc.

b. Proper but non-apodeictic places where theological arguments of authority are found

(1) The teaching of the church fathers (*sancti et doctores*)[33]

As I have already said, the teaching of the fathers of the church was not, according to Aquinas, in itself and of its very nature infallible: 'the fathers derive their authority from the *auctoritas ecclesiae*'.[34] Consequently, 'we should place more trust in the authority of the church than in the authority of [258] Augustine, Jerome, or any other teacher'.[35] These writers were therefore, in Aquinas' opinion, authentic sources of doctrine insofar as they testified to the church's consciousness of faith. As this could not be decided without critical examination, and these writers also frequently spoke on their own authority, their *auctoritates* were not, according to Aquinas, in themselves apodeictic. This was, in his view, so, despite the fact that the respect that they enjoyed in the whole of the church entitled them to a clear presumption in their favour, although their teaching would always have to be concretely examined and checked. At the same time, Aquinas and the other medieval theologians were of the opinion that their doctrines could not simply be dismissed—a correct sense had to be given to what they said by reverent exposition.

(2) The teaching of the theologians (*magistri*)

Aquinas made a clear distinction between the *authentica,* or *robur auctoritatis habentia,* that is, sources with an authentic or a normative value for us, and the so-called *magistralia,* that is, the church's post-patristic writers, now called 'theologians' or 'masters'. The latter had no real *auctoritas.* As Chenu has rightly said, 'the *dictum authenticum* is compelling, even though we must subject it to reverent exposition, whereas the *dictum magistrale* remains free opinion'.[36] Both the patristic and the scholastic writers were called 'doctors of the catholic faith' (*doctores catholicae fidei*) in the Middle Ages, but a difference was made in their [259] value as authorities.[37]

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[33] See M. Chenu, 'Les "philosophes" dans la philosophie chrétienne médiévale', *RSPT,* 26 (1937), 27-40. What Aquinas (and the other medieval theologians) meant by *sancti* in this context were the church fathers, as opposed to the *philosophi,* or pagan philosophers (who were outside the sphere of revelation).

[34] *ST* II-II q. 10, a. 12; *Quodl.* 2, q. 4, a. 2.

[35] *ST* II, q. 10, a. 12.

[36] M. D. Chenu, '"Authentica" et "Magistralia"' (i.e, the authentic writings and the writings of the masters), *DTP* 28 (1925), 30.

[37] See, for example, *ST* II-II, q. 5, a. 1 (according to the critical edition of de Leonina): 'quamvis dicta Hugonis a S. Victorie magistralia sint et robur auctoritatis *non* habeant' ('although the writings of Hugh of St Victor are "magisterial" and do not have the force of authority").

The masters or theologians undoubtedly had a certain authority, as far as their competence extended [38], but it was permissible to put forward counterarguments and even to defend a different thesis without taking them into account. The authority of a theologian who had not been approved by the authority of the church was therefore worth precisely what the proofs that he adduced were worth.

c. 'Extraneous' and non-apodeictic places

These were the *auctoritates philosophorum,* that is, the authority of the pagan philosophers who were outside the sphere of the revelation. In the theological context, there could be no question here of a 'proper' authority. It should be noted that Thomas was not directly referring here (*ST* I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2) to the 'reasonable proofs' put forward, for example, by the fathers or by theologians, as has been suggested by certain theologians as an interpretation of this text. He meant simply the 'quotations' or *auctoritates* which went back to non-christian authors and which were to be found either in scripture[39] (as, for example, in
[260] Paul, who quoted the *auctoritas* of the pagan Aratus, 'we are God's offspring') or in the *catholici doctores,* or which were employed in theology itself. These *auctoritates* could not, of course, establish the christian relevance of certain truths, but they did, in Aquinas' view, have some value in connection with the *praeambula fidei* and in speculative theology which, assuming the data of faith, attempts to throw light on their intelligibility. In this case, however, we should be dealing with the 'proofs from human reason', and I do not intend to discuss these here, in an exposition of the arguments of authority, especially as Aquinas himself also did not have these directly in mind in *ST* I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2. He did not, in other words, consider the apodeictic or only 'probable' character of the arguments from reason *(argumenta rationis)* directly and ex professo in a. 8, ad 2. A failure to appreciate the true perspective of this passage has led some authors to draw the wrong conclusion from the *extranea et probabilia:* 'reason is extraneous to theology, which knows no arguments other than those of divine authority'. [40] There is no direct reference here to philosophical proofs in theology—Aquinas gives an appraisal of these elsewhere. It is, moreover quite clear from another work that, in the case of arguments of authority, Aquinas was concerned with the *loci* that compel faith[41], and from yet another work that

[38] In connection with the controversy among medieval masters about the character of a sacrament, Albert said (*In IV Sent.,* d. 6, c, a. 4): 'neutra habet robur auctoritatis, nisi quantum facit usus magistrorum' ('neither has the force of authority, except insofar as its employment by the masters makes it so').
[39] *BT,* q. 2, 3, s.c.
[40] J. F. Bonnefoy, *La nature de la théologie selon saint Thomas d' Aquin,* Paris and Bruges, 1939, 57.
[41] *BT,* q. 2, a. 1, ad 5: 'cogere ad assensum fidei' ('compel us to the assent of faith').

the *argumenta auctoritatis ex necessitate vel probabilia*[42] were in fact arguments which did or did not compel the acceptance of faith.[43] Seen in this way, the [261] 'proofs from reason' are indeed extraneous to theology and can only be *rationes probabiles vel suasivae,* that is, arguments of convenience[44], unless they are used in respect of the *praeambula fidei,* which can also be established apodeictically by way of the human intellect.[45] For the real mysteries of faith, only *argumenta rationis probabilia* can be used, and in that case only for the believer (*nisi credenti*)[46]—faith, for example, in the Trinity can be made to appear to some extent plausible on a reasonable basis to whomever believes in this doctrine. In other words, the function of the *ratio* in speculative theology, in which the factuality of the data of faith is already assumed, is not directly involved in the problem answered by *ST* I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2. All that Aquinas says here is that a truth of faith cannot be intrinsically proved, with the result that, in establishing the *an sit* (the question 'whether it is so') of the mystery of faith, the *auctoritas rationis* can only put forward *argumenta extranea et probabilia.* As a so-called *probatio fidei,* or 'proof of faith', 'extraneous' arguments are only recommendatory.

4. Aquinas' synthesis

Argumentari ex auctoritate est maxime proprium sacrae doctrinae ('the argument of authority is the appropriate method in theology')[47]; unlike the purely human [262] sciences, in which the least powerful argument is that of authority, because these sciences rely on ascertainment and insight, theology as a science is based on revelation and thus on the authority of God. In close association with faith, human thought of course performs a co-essential function in throwing intelligible light on the data of God's word. The *ipse dixit* ultimately always refers to the God of revelation, whose word is to be found in the living church. The theological argument of authority must therefore be sought first and foremost in the living tradition of the church, the ultimate judge and norm of which, at least as far as we are concerned, is the church's teaching authority. This living tradition, as the witness of the one revelation, became objective, however, in the following ways. In the first place, it became objective in the constitutive

[42] Which Aquinas discussed in *ST* I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2.
[43] *Quodl.* 12, q. 17, a. 1, c. and ad 1: 'Dicta expositorum necessitatem non inducunt quod necesse sit eis credere, sed solum Scriptura canonica quae in Veteri et Novo Testamento est' ('only canonical scripture of the Old and New Testaments, and not the patristic exposition of scripture, is a compelling norm of faith for us').
[44] See, for example, *BT* q. 2, a. 1, ad 5; *SCG* I, 9; *RF c.* 2.
[45] *SCG* I, 9; *3 Sent.,* d. 24, q. 2, a. 3, sol. 2 (ed. Moos, 769).
[46] *BT*, q. 1, a.4.
[47] *ST* I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2.

objectivisations of Scripture and the apostolic practices and doctrines that were handed down and which in their turn determine the teaching authority of the church that acts as a norm in respect of us. Secondly, it also became objective in the writings of all the church's authors, as witnesses of the tradition that was alive at their time. Among these objectivisations, those of the church's teaching authority—the councils, for example—occupy an exceptional place.[48]

It follows, then, that every argument of authority is, theologically speaking, an argument from tradition in the modern sense of the word—the *paradosis,* that is, God's word living in and practised by the church, is the basis of all theology. Consequently, an argument of authority that relies, for example, on the 'unanimity' of the church fathers or of theologians does not derive its
[263] cogency from any kind of democratic principle ('fifty-one percent of the votes' or 'the absolute majority is right'), but from the fact that this consensus of opinion is indicative of the collective reaction of the church's sense of faith, interpreted by and guaranteed as authentic by the church's teaching authority.[49] Directly or indirectly, every theological argument of authority is therefore an appeal to the infallible authority of God's revelation.

Since the church's consciousness of faith is always identical in its dynamism, we can achieve a better understanding of this consciousness of faith today by appealing to the objectivisations of faith which have taken place in the past and which are the witnesses and the expression of the constantly living tradition of faith. We do not really appeal to the past in this way in order to prove the faith of the church today, but in order to obtain a better grasp of the rich content of the church's present and immortal life of faith. The history of the church is characterised by special emphases and silences—at every period, certain aspects of faith that were previously explicit are kept more in the background, while doctrines that were previously latent are explicitly recognised. The exploration of the entire objective tradition of faith thus provides us with a more intimate understanding of the content of the church's present awareness of faith, which certainly always includes implicit treasures. What must, however, always be ascertained is whether a constant datum of tradition—or at least a datum of tradition that has appeared again and again—was in fact handed down as a datum of faith. And this is not always easy to determine—theology may be able to do this in a scientific, but ultimately fallible manner,
[264] but it is only the teaching authority of the church that can do it in an infallible manner. It is in this perspective that the various arguments of authority acquire

[48] See the article 'Overlevering' in *Theologisch Woordenboek,* part 3, Roermond and Masseik, 1958, especially cols. 3691-2.

[49] See part 1, chapter 4: 'The development of the apostolic faith into the dogma of the church', on pp. [63-92] above.

their significance, that of pointing out an authentic and biblical doctrine or a constant and patristic view, the *lex orandi lex credendi* or proof from the liturgy, and so on. A great deal of caution is required in the use of all these arguments, as human ideas and terminology that are also conditioned by the prevailing situation play an important part in them. They are, however, such that we can, after examining them critically, derive arguments of authority from tradition in a scientific, even though ultimately fallible, manner. Nonetheless, it will always be the teaching authority of the church that will definitively and infallibly settle the matter in the end.

The argument of authority may, however, have another, human significance (even though it is conducted within the sphere of theology), and here the principle will hold good that this authority is worth precisely what the argument itself is worth. In other words, we accept the argument not because this or that author says it, but because he puts forward conclusive arguments. In this sense, an authoritative theologian is consequently someone whom experience has shown superabundantly to have had a consistently correct view, with the result that there will be a clear presumption in favour of the fact that what he teaches must a priori at least be taken into account. At this level, then, the authority of one theologian may well be greater than that of 'fifty-one percent' (for example, of a series of theological manuals). Moreover, when this is also the church's own view, then the presumption in favour of this author is evidently so strong that the church can regard his inspiration, broadly speaking, as a safe guide in the study of theology, and his fundamental [265] doctrines can be prescribed as a practical norm in the teaching of theology in the church, either by an implicit or by an explicit announcement on the part of the church. Thus, the 'schoolmen' of the church have been Augustine up to the Middle Ages, Peter Lombard from the twelfth century until after the Council of Trent, and Aquinas from about the time of the Council of Trent.[50] The longer the works of a 'schoolman' in this sense remain in force as a model in the teaching of theology, the more must be said for the range of his inspiration, but also perhaps for his successors' lack of creativity![51]

[50] For the question of how Aquinas himself should be regarded, according to his own doctrinal principles, as a 'theological authority', see M. D. Chenu, 'Maître Thomas est-il une autorité?' *RT* 30 (1925), 187-94.

[51] Apart from the works already mentioned, the following have been consulted in connection with the preceding section: I. Backes, *Die Christologie des hl. Thomas und die griechischen Kirchenväter,* Paderborn, 1931; G. Bardy, 'Sur les sources patristiques grecques de St Thomas dans la première partie de la Somme', *RSPT* 12 (1923), 493-502; L. Baur, 'Die Form der wissenschaftlichen Kritik bei Thomas van Aquin', *Misc. Grabmann,* 688-709; J. Beumer, 'Das katholische Schriftprinzip in der theologischen Literatur der Scholastik bis zur Reformation', *Schol 16* (1941), 24-52; M. D. Chenu, *Introduction à l'étude de St Thomas d'Aquin,* Montreal and Paris 1950; J. de Ghellinck, 'Patristique et argument de tradition au bas moyen-âge', *Misc. Grabmann,* 403-26; J. de Ghellinck, 'Pagina et S. Pagina. Histoire d'un mot, transformation de l'objet primitivement désigné', *Misc. Pelzer,* 23-59; H.

[266] 2. TRUTH OR RELEVANCE FOR THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IN SCHOLASTIC THEOLOGY

There has been a tendency in recent years to go back more than in the past to Albert the Great and Bonaventure, in the belief that they represent the substance of the patristic theology, and thus the substance of authentically christian theology, more excellently than Aquinas, who, it is felt, deviated from the theology of the fathers in favour of a pure and abstract aristotelian approach. I shall attempt here to clarify only two aspects that are characteristic of the pre-thomist theology of the so-called *Summa Alexandrina,* of Albert the Great and of Bonaventure, in order to ascertain to what extent these two characteristics are present in Aquinas as well. It should then be possible to establish whether Aquinas really broke with the theology of the fathers or whether he synthesised all these elements in a higher unity.

[267] These two aspects, which I propose to consider briefly here, are the saving aspect and the affective aspect. Both are given considerable prominence in the present renewal of theology, and it is possible that we may learn something from these older theologians here since, to judge from the prologues to the works of Alexander, Albert, and Bonaventure, it is precisely these two aspects that define theology. For them, theology was not a science—and here I mean a science in the aristotelian sense[52]—but a 'wisdom'. Wisdom, too, should not be understood here in the aristotelian sense, for this would include science[53], but in the affective sense. It was, for these theologians, *sapientia, sapida scientia,* 'a tasteful science'—an 'affective science' as Alexander called it, or a *scientia secundum pietatem* ('science in accordance with religion') in the words of Albert.

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de Lubac, 'A propos de la formule: diversi sed non adversi', *RSR* 40 (1952) (*Melanges Lebreton* II), 27-40; A. Dondaine, 'La documentation patristique de St Thomas', *RSPT* 29 (1940), 326-7; G. Geenen, 'De opvatting en de houding van den H. Thomas v. Aquino bij het gebruik der bronnen zijner theologie', *Bijd* 4 (1941), 112-47, 224-54; G. Geenen, 'Les "auctoritates" dans la doctrine du baptême chez St Thomas d'Aquin. Leur usage, leur influence', *ETL* 15 (1938), 279-329; G. Geenen, 'St Thomas d'Aquin et ses sources pseudépigraphiques', *ETL* 20 (1943), 71-80; G. Geenen, 'Saint Thomas et les Pères', *DTC* xv-1 (1946), 738-61; N. Halligan, 'Patristic Schools in the Summa', *Thorn* 7 (1944), 271-322 and 505-43; A. Landgraf, 'Les preuves scripturaires et patristiques dans l'argumentation théologique', *RSPT* 20 (1931), 287-92; A. Landgraf, 'Die Schriftzitate in der Scholastik urn die Wende des 12, zum 13. Jahrhunderts', *Bbl* 18 (1937), 74-94; P. Minges, *Über Väterzitate bei den Scholastikern,* Regensburg 1923; B. Paré, A. Brunet and P. Tremblay, *La renaissance du XIIe siècle. Les èccles et l'enseignement,* Ottawa 1933; M. Riquet, 'St Thomas et les "auctoritates" en Philosophie', *AP* 3 (1926), 117-55; C. Spicq, *Esquisse d'une histoire de l'exégèse latin au moyen-âge,* Paris, 1944; C. Spice, 'St Thomas d'Aquin, exégète', *DTC* xv-1 (1946), 694-738; J. van der Ploeg, 'The Place of Holy Scripture in the Theology of St Thomas', *Thom* 10 (1947), 398-422; G. von Hertling, 'Augustinus-zitate bei Thomas von Aquin', *SBAW* 4 (1904), 535-602.

[52] In the aristotelian sense, science is the insight into the connection between principles and the conclusions that are necessarily illuminated by them.

[53] In the aristotelian sense, all that wisdom adds to the concept of science is that the conclusions are being related to the deepest and ultimate principles.

It was something that a dominican theologian, de Cortenson, later called a 'theology of mind and heart'. These three great scholastics were not formally concerned with truth in itself, but with the relevance of truth for the life of man. The object of theology was for them not the truth of faith formally, in its intelligibility, but this truth as 'scibile secundum quod est inclinans ad pietatem'[54], that is, truth in its relevance for the christian life. They did not, in other words, regard the *verum ut verum* (truth precisely as truth), but the *verum sub ratione boni salutaris* (truth as a value in human life), as the object of theology. In concrete terms, this means *Deus beatificans*—the God of our [268] salvation (Albert). Thus, the aim of theology was not speculation, but instruction in how to live the christian life. Bonaventure rephrased the question: 'Is theology both speculative and practical?', more concretely as: 'Do we practise theology because of an urge for deeper insight, or because we wish to become holier?'[55] According to these theologians, then, theology was directly at the service of the christian life. The entire study was related to man's destiny, his salvation in and through Christ, and was not conducted rationally, but 'affectively'. That is why the *Summa Alexandrina* saw a gap that could not be bridged between a 'rational science' and what it called a 'science of salvation'—or, in other words, theology.

Thus we come to the attractive definition of theology according to the *Summa Alexandrina:*

> Theology is the science of understanding the divine substance by means of Christ in his work of reparation.[56]

Theology, in other words, knows God through the mystery of Christ. Because everything in theology is seen, according to the *Summa Alexandrina,* from the aspect of salvation, and so not in an abstract and metaphysical light, but in the concrete light of the history of salvation, therefore Christ is also directly involved in the very definition of theology.

This brief outline of the theological thought of Alexander, Albert, and [269] Bonaventure may serve to sum up the theological situation at the time of Aquinas. It is certainly possible to see in this situation the continuation of a very old patristic tradition. Recent works on the theology of Augustine, for example, confirm this. They emphasise the central importance of the saving aspect, the affective character, in the theological thought of this doctor of the church as

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[54] Albert, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 2 (ed. Borgnet, part 31, 11).
[55] *In I Sent.,* Proem., q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, 13): 'utrum theologia sit contemplationis gratia an ut boni fiamus' ('whether theology is for contemplative speculation or for us to become good').
[56] *Summa Alexandrina* I, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, 6): 'theologia est scientia de substantia divina cognoscenda per Christum in opere reparationis'. Or: 'scientia de Deo cognoscendo per Christum redemptorem' ('the science of understanding God by means of Christ the redeemer').

well, and the fact that his theology consequently also has a patristic and apostolic and thus, ultimately, a 'kerygmatic' orientation. What we have here is, in other words, an authentic christian inheritance which was treated by Alexander, Albert, and Bonaventure only in a more systematic and consciously reflective way, because at this time a consciously devised methodology had been achieved in theology, a reflection about the theological method as already practised in living experience.

But, as I have already indicated, the charge of breaking with this patristic tradition has been made against Aquinas. He is said to have spurned the warm traditional example of 'christian wisdom' and to have modelled his theology on the cold reason of an aristotelian science. From the historical point of view, it cannot of course be denied that Aquinas did appeal to the traditional, patristic *sacra doctrina*. This accounts for the fact that he was able to call theology a science in an analogous but real sense, at least formally as far as its reasoning function is concerned. He certainly did not consequently call it a science in respect of everything that it is and does.[57] But this is not our main concern
[270] here—what does concern us is the fact that it is not true that the authentically patristic elements were simply banished by Aquinas' vision. I propose to show that he, on the contrary, did not leave out any single essential element. By this I do not mean that he took these elements over eclectically, as, for example, Albert did, but that he accorded a place to them either in theology (the saving aspect) or outside theology, but in immediate association with it (the affective aspect).

1. The saving aspect

According to Aquinas, theology is a science of faith, a reflection about faith, that is demanded by the structure of faith itself. We may say that the life of faith includes not only an element of firm resolution, of repose or settled assent or resolute acceptance of faith, but also an element of reflection which is in motion. The fact that this reflection about faith is not at rest does not in any way invalidate the resolution of our consent to faith. It is rather the result both of the fact that the datum of faith is not self-evident and of the special nature of the human intellect, which is inclined towards quidditative insight. This natural attitude of the intellect moreover reaches an apogee here, as the 'object' is one that at the same time offers itself as the highest value in life—God himself, 'the first truth and salvation'. That is why, together with the tension of the 'natural desire to see God', an unpleasant resentment on the part of the intellect is also

[57] Theology could be called a science (in the modern sense) in respect of all its functions—that is, a knowledge that is critically justified, methodically conducted, and systematically planned.

revealed in this aspect of reflection—our mind feels itself to have been 'made captive' when confronted with the 'obscurity' of the datum of faith.[58] Consequently, if it is the purpose of theology to be a reflection about faith, then [271] the structure of faith itself must also be relevant for the structure of theology.

If, then, we consider the material object of our catholic faith, that is, what we believe, we come to the conclusion that, according to Aquinas, saving truths constitute this object. We have been raised to the level of the supernatural order, that is, to God as the 'content of our salvation'. In addition, this activity is also raised to this level, so that we may attain this transcendent destiny in a vital way, that is, through activity that is strictly human, but which has been made supernatural. Since the dynamic force of man has an intellectual character, knowledge of this destiny and of the means of attaining it must also already be provided in advance. Consequently, revelation is a necessary element in the supernatural order of salvation. It is the good news of our elevation to a supernatural destiny—God reveals himself as man's supernatural destiny. God reveals himself as God, because he gives himself to us precisely as the content of our salvation. He makes himself known to us as our salvation. 'Notum fecit Dominus salutare suum.' We may therefore say that, according to Aquinas, the real object of our faith is the God of our salvation or, expressed in a different way, 'Deus qui sub ratione Deitatis est salus nostra: Veritas prima salutaris'—that is, God as God-for-us.

Aquinas therefore placed the God of Salvation, *Deus salutaris,* at the very beginning of the *Summa,* in the first article. As known by us, the God of salvation is, it is true, 'plurified' in various conceptual truths.[59] These truths do [272] not, however, thereby lose their saving character—'actus credentis non terminatur ad enuntiabile sed ad rem' ('the act of the believer terminates, not at the object of the profession, but at the reality')[60], that is, it is not the conceptual ideas that are the aspect of repose in the act of faith, but the reality of salvation. As a result, Aquinas was able to speak in this first article of the *Summa* of saving truths, 'truths that are necessary to salvation'. He is therefore really writing about God who is God-for-us precisely in his being God. Moreover, if we maintain that this saving aspect should not be included in the object of faith, the question can be raised as to exactly what the criterion should be for the extension of the material object of faith. If our answer is formal revelation, then we are simply shifting the difficulty. What, then, is the criterion by which God

[58] Aquinas, *Verit.* q. 14, a. 1: 'Intellectus credentis dicitur *captivatus,* quia tenetur principiis alienis et non propriis' ('the intellect of the believer is called "captive" in that it is bound by principles foreign to it rather than its own').
[59] *Verit.,* q. 14, a. 12: 'plurificatur per diversa enuntiabilia' ('he is "plurified" in the various objects of the profession of faith").
[60] *ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2.

reveals certain supernatural truths and not others? For, as Aquinas said explicitly in his commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (the writings of Aquinas which are of particular interest for his teaching on faith):

> Not everything that, in God's wise knowledge, transcends our human intellect, is an object of faith.[61]

Aquinas consequently put the criterion for the extension of the material object of faith in the *beatitudo humana,* man's salvation—for him, it was the relevance for human life, the saving significance of a truth that decided whether God revealed this truth or not:

> Not everything that, in God's wise knowledge, transcends our human intellect, is an
> [273] object of faith, but only what is necessary to our knowledge of our supernatural destiny and of everything that directs us in a supernatural manner towards it.

All truths of faith are therefore saving truths by the very fact that they are truths of faith. To maintain, as some 'kerygmatic theologians' do, that prominence ought only to be given, in faith and therefore in preaching and theology, to those truths that are saving truths and are relevant to human life, and that other truths may be neglected, would be to misjudge the real nature of every truth of faith formally as a truth of faith and thus to betray a too pragmatic, utilitarian conception of value and relevance for life. In Aquinas' view, it was God himself who, by the very fact that he revealed the truths of faith *propter nostram salutem,* for our salvation, determined their relevance. The totality of faith as such has a saving value and, within this totality, so does each separate truth of faith. On pain of falling into error *(ST* II-II, q. 5, a. 3), consent to faith refers to this totality as such, to the entire complex of salvation. One of theology's many tasks must therefore be to attempt to make this saving value and this relevance for life—in the christian sense of the word—of every separate truth of faith within the totality of faith intelligible. This was clearly expressed by the First Vatican Council:

> When reason illuminated by faith searches with diligence, piety, and prudence, it attains—through the gift of God —a certain understanding of the mysteries [of faith], and an abundantly fruitful understanding at that:... from the interconnection of these very mysteries with each other and with the final end and purpose of man.[62]

[274] According to this council, one of the main functions of speculative theology was to discover the reference towards salvation and modestly to attempt to make it intelligible, as well as to investigate the mutual connections between

[61] *Sent.,* d. 24, a. 3, sol. 1, ad 3.
[62] DS 3016 (=DR 1796). For the Latin text see p. [127], *n.* 53 above.

the mysteries of faith. As I have said, theology is reflection about the data that we accept in divine faith—positive theology attempts to describe these data of faith, in the light of the church's teaching authority, according to their pure factuality, whereas speculative theology attempts to find their aspect of intelligibility. Theology formally considers the 'first truth' that brings salvation (and, as it is known by us, this therefore means the 'truths that are necessary to salvation'), not as believed in—this is assumed—, but as intelligible. This does not, however, mean that the inner reference of these truths of faith towards salvation is thereby set aside—because it is a reflection about the objective, present, and implicit content of faith, theology is at the same time a reflection about the reference towards salvation which is inseparable from the content of faith. Theology is therefore bound to throw light scientifically on the saving value of all the data of faith.

The direct result of this is that Aquinas also regarded both the mystery of the Trinity and what he called the 'mystery of Christ's humanity' as the two basic truths on which the totality of faith is founded and in which it acquires its significance (*ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 8), even going so far as to call it 'that through which man finds his salvation' (*ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 5). The point at issue is salvation itself, God, and the means to salvation, Christ. All the rest is at the service of reflection about 'God who in Christ is our salvation'. Aquinas' theocentricity is, because of the necessary relationship between salvation and faith, a theocentricity that has its point of support in Christ. In other words, the catholic doctrine of faith is [275] centred in God, but in and through Christ. 'The whole of christian faith turns around the divinity and the humanity of Christ.'[63]

It is thus possible to see that the saving aspect is as essential to Aquinas ' theology as it is to the theology of the church fathers. It is not here that Aquinas differs from the fathers, and there is consequently no question of his having broken with patristic theology. A difference does, however, become evident in the interpretation of the *beatitudo* or salvation itself. An urge towards salvation, an *appetitus beatitudinis,* is revealed both in Albert's and in Aquinas' theology. For Aquinas, however, this state of blessedness was to be found formally in the intellect, the will following the intellect in ultimate resignation. Aquinas viewed everything from the vantage point of the beatific vision. According to him, man's spiritual life reached its highest point in contemplation, and he preferred for this reason to stress the contemplative character of faith. Aquinas saw faith as focused on the truth as such, and as becoming effective, practical, and apostolic only by extension. For him, therefore, it had a value in itself, a value that was not dependent even on the moral and apostolic activity aroused by

[63] *De articulis fidei et Ecclesiae sacramentis*, Proem.

faith. A radiation or extension of faith was, in his view, possible in the practical sphere (the moral and apostolic aspect of faith), because the 'first truth', although it was primarily the object of contemplation, was at the same time the 'aim of all our desires and activities'.[64] This explains Aquinas' threefold repetition of the same outline: (1) as far as *faith* is concerned, 'faith is speculative
[276] and practical, but above all speculative'.[65] (2) as far as connatural *divine reflection* on the basis of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is concerned, 'the gifts of the Holy Spirit [i.e. insight, wisdom, and knowledge] are speculative and practical, but above all speculative'[66]; and (3) as far as connatural *human reflection* is concerned—in other words, theology—, 'theology is speculative and practical, but above all speculative'.[67] Aquinas thus emphasised the dogmatic character of faith and theology—for him, theology was simply dogmatic theology and only secondarily, by extension, moral theology.[68] He thus established the indissoluble unity of dogma and ethics by showing that moral theology is merely speculation about the mystery of God itself, and thus dogmatic, but with a view to its practical reflections upon human life. Aquinas would therefore have answered the question: 'Is theology for the purpose of gaining a deeper insight or for that of becoming good; or, in other words, is it speculative or practical?', as Bonaventure answered it: 'for the purpose of becoming good'.[69] We practise theology in order to become more holy and to bring those who believe to holiness. The aim of theology is practical and apostolic, too, and indeed essentially so—but only *extensione,* by 'repercussion'. It is here that Aquinas differs from Albert and Bonaventure. It is precisely our reflection
[277] about the dogmatic truths of salvation, about the *Deus salutaris,* that enables us to appreciate the relevance of the truths of faith for the christian life. Action is enlightened and guided by this insight, and our practical, apostolic activity can only gain from it if we respect the distinctive nature of faith and theology, which is in principle *speculative* that is, disinterested and contemplative, and not utilitarian and pragmatic. That is why Aquinas stated in the first article of the *Summa* that knowledge, that is, knowledge of God as a value for human life, the knowledge of 'those truths that are necessary to salvation', must be presupposed if this relevance for life is really to be a norm for life.

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[64] *ST* II-II, q. 4, a. 2, ad 3.
[65] *ST* II-II, q. 4, a. 2, ad 3. See also *3 Sent.,* d. 23, q. 2, a. 3, sol. 2.
[66] *ST* II-II, q. 8, a. 6; a. 3; q. 45, a. 3, ad 3.
[67] *ST* I, q. l, a. 4.
[68] *ST* II-II, q. 4, a. 2, ad 3: 'habitus speculativus extensione fit practicus' ('the practice of reflection is, by extension, made practical').
[69] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.,* Proem, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, 13): 'utrum theologia sit contemplationis gratia an ut boni fiamus seu utrum sit speculativa an practica:... etiam ut boni fiamus'.

It is therefore evident that Aquinas fully maintained the saving aspect of the truths of faith and their relevance for the christian life—values which the whole christian tradition had always stressed—but that he provided them, with the help of Aristotle, with a different basis.

2. The affective aspect

This is an even more delicate question and, because Aquinas in fact banished the entire affective aspect from his theology, it would seem as if we must decide against him here. In a certain sense, he was very far from being a protagonist of a 'theology of mind and heart'.

In view of the fact that this affective element forms an essential part of the authentically christian inheritance, we may say a priori that Aquinas did not simply reject it in his theology which was so closely linked to tradition. It is true to say that there is evidence of a certain lack of differentiation in the theology of an Augustine, an Albert, or a Bonaventure, in the sense that they confused [278] scientific research with insight into faith through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. As a result, theology became, in their case, a *scientia affectionis* ('a science of the feelings'). There is, on the other hand, a striking differentiation in the case of Aquinas. He made a clear distinction between insight into faith *per modum cognitionis* ('by the mode of understanding'), that is, by theology, and insight into faith *per modum inclinationis seu connaturalitatis* ('by the mode of inclination or affinity'), that is, by the affective knowledge of faith as acquired by the saints *(ST* I, q. 1, a. 6, ad 3). He called theology a reflection about faith *per modum cognitionis,* a technical science acquired by analytical and synthetical study (*per studium habetur*). In this way, he rejected the affective aspect as the appropriate theological method of knowing, and thereby allayed the danger of being lured into vague arguments. This, of course, does not in any way mean that he claimed to be able to make everything clear by means of his scientific method. On the contrary, he was the first to recognise that theological insights could only be reached 'insofar as such a matter makes this possible'.[70]

For Aquinas, then, theology was not a knowledge *per modum affectionis.* He was nonetheless able to preserve this affective aspect by transferring it to the sphere of reflection about faith by virtue of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In the life of faith as such, he distinguished, apart from an aspect of acceptance (the *adhaesio),* a supernatural aspect of perception and affective judgement *(ST* II-II, q. 9, a. 1). This aspect of perception and judgement was, in Aquinas' view, made possible by the fact that faith is at the same time believing in love, *informata caritate,* and that the gifts of the Holy Spirit (insight, wisdom, and knowledge) [279]

[70] *ST,* Prologue: 'secundum quod materia patietur'.

are only modifications, further refinements of what was already implied, in an embryonic form, in faith. This refined insight into faith by virtue of the gifts of the Spirit is rooted in charity and therefore comes about 'in the manner of connaturality and affection' or by means of a kind of sympathy in grace with the content of faith. This results in what Aquinas called 'a certain sharp perception of the divine truths'[71], a divine acumen, on the basis of the conformity of the will with God—that is to say, a consciousness by virtue of grace.

This entire thomist doctrine should therefore be seen in the light of Aquinas' teaching about love as the 'completion of faith' (*caritas forma fidei*), a doctrine that is occasionally misunderstood. He did not simply call love the final form of faith as a result of his general teaching that 'love is the completion of all the virtues' ('caritas est forma omnium virtutum'). He meant much more than this. Mature faith, *fides informata caritate,* was for him not simply faith-plus-love. The relationship between the two was much more intimate—faith itself was inwardly completed precisely as faith, that is, as intellectual consent, and thus as a direct extension of believing. There is no need to examine this more closely here. All that needs to be said is that the impulse of the will is essential to the act of faith and that faith is a fruit of love, but in the intellect—'the assent of the intellect moved by the will' *(assensus intellectus motus a voluntate).* The act of faith is thus inwardly connected with the inclination of the will. Faith will therefore be inwardly more perfect if the inclination of the will is aroused by divine charity.[72]

[280] Unlike the moral virtues (which refer only to the object of *charity,* because they are directed by love not to their own object, but to that of charity, the final aim), faith refers to the object of charity precisely insofar as faith is directed to its *own* object, the 'first truth', 'for the first truth is connected with the will insofar as it is at the same time an aim' (ST II-II, q. 2, a. 2). This brings us once more formally face to face with the first truth that brings salvation. There is consequently a close affinity between faith and love. Of course, faith remains an act of the human spirit which, independent of charity, continues to retain its own and thus supernatural distinction, but which owes its completion in the intellect itself and thus its inward perfection as faith to charity alone. From the theological point of view, therefore, love is the normal environment of christian faith. As a result, Aquinas regarded the more pronounced acumen possessed by a believer in a state of grace, and thus in a state of love, as the normal

[71] *ST* II-II, q. 49, a. 2, ad 2: 'quaedam acuta perspectio divinorum'.
[72] *Verit.* q. 14, a. 5, ad 4; *ST* II-II, q. 4, ad 3.

flourishing of the christian life of faith, and not as a *gratia gratis data*.[73] The fact that people of simple but deep faith display, because they experience faith in an active and powerful way, a spontaneous insight into faith that is not reflective but nonetheless profound is the experimental proof of this theory. We are thus confronted by a double insight into faith—insight achieved in a connatural divine manner, *per modum inclinations* (the affective insight) and insight achieved in a connatural human manner, *per modum cognitionis* (theology). Aquinas; made a clear distinction between the two *(ST* I, q. 1, a. 6, ad 3), regarding them as specific and different wisdoms. This sharp definition of the limits of each marked a decided advance on the pre-thomist theology of, for [281] example, Albert and Bonaventure.

On the other hand, however, although they are different, there is a perceptible interrelationship between rational wisdom and affective wisdom in faith. It is therefore important to emphasise that theology, even though its method is undoubtedly strictly technical and scientific, nonetheless to some extent presupposes the affective wisdom in the optimum case. We know that Aquinas regarded theology as a science that was subordinate to faith—'scientia subalternata scientiae Dei mediante fide'—and that this is so because of the structure itself of faith. The First Vatican Council defined the subjective principle of theology as the *ratio fide illustrata,* the intellect formally in its association with faith. Now, when faith is fully mature—*informata caritate*—it has, as I have already said, greater perspicacity and a finer insight into faith. If, then, theology (both positive and speculative) is indeed closely and permanently linked with faith because of its subordinate character, it can, in Aquinas' view, only gain immeasurably from this faith's possession of full maturity and extreme acumen by reason of 'affective wisdom'. And, relying directly on Aquinas' premisses, we have experimental proof of this theory as well. Saints in the strict sense, that is, those men who possessed this affective insight into faith to a very high degree, were also, when they devoted themselves to theology, the greatest theologians. This was clearly so both in the case of the fathers of the church and in the case of the scholastics of the high Middle Ages. Assuming that the natural prerequisites of intellectual, philosophical, and historical formation are already satisfied, the best theologian is the christian who also possesses this affective wisdom of faith because he [282] actively embodies in a holy life the christian faith.

We should, however, be careful not to interpret the ability of this affective wisdom to infiltrate into theology that is conducted on a technical basis wrongly. Aquinas had a marked aversion to all forms of vague mysticism that

[73] That would be a grace that is not given separately to everyone, but only to certain individuals, and then not for themselves, but for the service of the community.

sacrificed technical analysis and synthesis pursued according to the critical method by the constant use of such obscure remarks as, 'I feel this way about it'. The influence of infused wisdom on theology is purely inspirational. In other words, this wisdom only inspires work in the historical sphere and in the sphere of speculative theology that is closely allied to faith. However important it may be in itself and to the life of the spirit, personal experience of faith based on 'feeling' is of no value theologically if it is not justified and made fully explicit at the intelligible level. This also applies, of course, to every science. As Pasteur so rightly said, there is in every science an area of 'inspired ideas' and spontaneous insights which are initially not justified but which must, at a later stage, be justified scientifically and intellectually. If this does not take place, then these ideas will never be of any value to the community.

The felicitous influence of this affective knowledge of faith on theology absolves us least of all from the need to analyse accurately and critically. What we certainly do not require is a diluted form of theology, tailored to fit the needs of preachers, an accommodating theology which will suit romantic tastes. Theology is, and will always be, a scientific reflection about faith. This fact, however, need never act as a restraint on the close association of theology with life so long as it follows the structure of faith that is, after all, already
[283] theology in an incipient and spontaneous form. Theology as such is not a pious elevation of the soul, but a science, and consequently technical. It is and must be a science, and must therefore entail all the laborious and nerve-racking process of painful analysis, fairmindedness, and serious thought, which so often turns counter to man's inclinations, and an almost scrupulous use of methodological precision. Up to a certain point, there is of course bound to be a tension between every science and life itself, for the simple reason that the scientific process demands a certain distance, a certain detachment from life. Life is after all spontaneous, and science, being reflective, to some extent checks the impulse to live. This is the age-old idea of *primum vivere deinde philosophari,* of living first and only philosophising afterwards, and not one science is exempt from this law, not even theology which is so closely associated with life. Even theology does not, therefore, coincide entirely with life itself. A certain feeling of 'alienation from life', in the sense previously referred to, will inevitably always be present in the work of theology, too. But, although this feeling is inherent in the practice of every science, its manifestation in the sphere of theology is perhaps all the more painful, since a believer—and this the theologian should be above all—is all the more profoundly aware of the fact that the catholic faith is primarily not a science, but a stimulus to effective, loving christian life, 'by means of which', as Aquinas observed, 'we can at last attain to the beatitude of

immortal life by rising again'.[74] It is only in the case of an insight into faith that has not been acquired scientifically, but is infused wisdom on a basis of supernatural 'sympathy', that all alienation from life is overcome.

[284] Let us therefore accept and be loyal to the technical scientific method in the positive and speculative theological study of faith. May this be inspired at the same time by the life of faith as experienced both personally and collectively in the church. But, as we are swept along by the tide of modern life, let us at the same time avoid its being diluted to the level of mere glossy vulgarisation, which may perhaps be appropriate elsewhere, but not in the theological training of the catholic priesthood. Anyone who has studied the synthesis of faith, in its saving aspect, in a technically scientific way will derive all the more abundant benefit from this study in his apostolic activity, at least as soon as he is able to dissociate himself from this technically scientific element.

I have, then, tried briefly to show how Aquinas did full justice to the patristic elements, but at the same time how these elements underwent a shift of emphasis in his writings, because of his aristotelian approach and his sharper insight into the structure of faith. It is always instructive to find out how great theologians went to work in their own time, not in order to imitate them, but so that we may also do, independently, in our own time what they did in theirs.

[74] *ST* III, q. 1, Prol.: 'per quam ad beatitudinem immortalis vitae resurgendo pervenire possumus'.

Part 3

THE VALUE OF OUR SPEECH ABOUT GOD AND OF OUR CONCEPTS OF FAITH

Chapter 11

THE CONCEPT OF "TRUTH"

The problems concerning the concepts *truth* and *reality* which demand consideration by the Second Vatican Council in various forms may be discussed under three headings: (1) *truth* and the possession of truth; (2) the conceptual character of our knowledge, and Modernism; and (3) the problem of the reinterpretation of dogma.

1. TRUTH IN ITSELF AND TRUTH AS A POSSESSION

1. Our present thinking is characterized by a critical attitude towards the rationalism of previous centuries. Long before even the emergence of existentialism, thought which, in the Hellenistic climate of Western civilization, was to a very great extent orientated towards the consideration of abstract and universal and unchangeable truths had changed course and was moving in a direction whose motto was *vers le concret,* back to the concrete, shifting reality. It was from this background of modern thought that both existentialism and phenomenology emerged; but from it also emerged a great variety of attempts on the part of neo-Thomist thinkers to reassess human thought as a faculty of truth whereby reality could be meaningfully encountered, according to the way in which this reality discloses itself to the activity of human thought which both extracts and gives meaning. Conceptual, rational thought is contrasted with lived experience, *l'expérience vécue.* Present-day thought is clearly reacting on [006] the one hand against idealism, according to which human thought itself creatively produces its contents and therefore truth, and on the other hand against the "representational realism" of scholasticism, which regards the content of our concepts as an exact reflection of reality without any reference to a human act which confers meaning. This reaction against these two trends of thought clearly moves in two directions. On the one hand, it tends in the direction of phenomenology, one of the basic affirmations of which is that the world is essentially a "world-for-me." In other words, reality has no independent, absolute meaning, but many different significations in relation to man, and these significations vary according to the standpoint from which man

approaches or deals with reality. Indeed, according to many modern phenomenologists, the objective signification of a reality can be found only in the meaning that this reality has in relation to man. On the other hand, there is also the trend of thought followed by certain Catholic philosophers (especially de Petter and Strasser) who claim that, implicit in the relative meanings given by man, there is an absolute meaning in reality. This meaning is, in their view, independent of human thought and acts, in its absolute value, as the norm for all meanings given by man. This second movement attempts to gear what is true in phenomenological thought to what may be called the insights of the *philosophia perennis*, but this perennial philosophy is consequently placed in a perspective which is entirely different from that in which it was seen in scholastic thought.

The notion of truth has thus become much more "supple" in modern thought—so supple, in fact, that it has in many cases moved in the direction of complete relativism. The modern insight that the essence of man is inseparable
[007] from his historicity has, of its very nature, resulted in a more flexible view of truth than the traditional one, according to which man is seen in terms of a human nature that has been permanently defined once and for all time and is incapable of being inwardly conditioned by concrete, changing circumstances. In the modern view, insofar as it accepts an absolute reality at all, reality (as truth) is seen as the never-wholly-to-be-deciphered background of all our human interpretations. The ontological basis, as the mysterious source of a still-hidden fullness of meaning, remains the same and does not change, but the human interpretation of this basis, and thus man's possession of truth, grows and evolves. This is, however, drawn in one definite direction by this implicit ontological significance, so that truth is always approached more and more concretely, even though it is never completely apprehended.

If we disregard the relativist views, according to which no absolute truth exists (a view which is, of course, implicitly atheistic), we are nonetheless forced, by experience itself, to affirm—against the background of the absolute truth that determines our thought as a norm—the imperfection and the evolving and relative nature of our possession of truth, and consequently the fact that our earlier insights are capable of inexhaustible amplification. It is the fundamental orientation to the absolute implicit in all our knowledge which gives continuity to our human and constantly changing consciousness. From a finite, limited, constantly changing, and historical standpoint, we have a view of absolute truth, although we never have this in our power. In this sense, we cannot say that truth changes. We cannot therefore say that what was true before is now untrue, for even our affirmation of truth does not change or become obsolete. The standpoints from which we approach truth, however, are changing continuously and our knowledge is thus always growing inwardly.

The whole of our human knowledge is, in its orientation towards the absolute, also coloured by these standpoints. It is, however, at the same time apparent from the fact that we are aware of the existence of these perspectives from which we view absolute truth that we rise above relativism. We do not possess a *conscience survolante,* an awareness that is able to transcend all relative standpoints and thus survey objective reality. Yet this is still the view held in many scholastic circles with regard to truth. The consequence of this is that differences of view are frequently confused with the relativist tendencies that are in fact present in modern thought. [008]

It is at the same time clear, from this "perspectivism" of our knowledge (which is orientated towards absolute reality and also regulated by it), that man's insight into truth will never lead to complete unanimity. Our maintaining an open and receptive attitude in our affirmation of the truth towards what is true in the views of others is, anyway, a condition for the attainment of the highest possible degree of unanimity.

2. We have also achieved in recent years a more modulated insight into the multi-dimensional nature of the human world of truth.[1]

Thus there is, for example, the truth of the everyday, practical world, the truth of modern positive science, the truth to which philosophy aspires, and finally the truth which we attain and love in religious faith. [2]

Thus the truth of the positive sciences is confined to the world of phenomena. These sciences are therefore concerned only with the verifiable aspects of reality. As a result, these sciences do not cover the whole of reality and therefore cannot claim to replace metaphysical and religious truths. But neither should someone who is convinced of his affirmations of metaphysical and religious truths simply play these off against the partial values of the positive sciences. The first attitude would lead to dogmatic positivism and scientism, and the second to a religious dogmatism that denies different levels of truth. In the problem of truth, we have therefore to take into account the multi-dimensional character of truth, which cannot be reduced to one single type of truth. This view too has not yet generally penetrated into every Catholic circle. [009]

2. THE VALUE OF OUR CONCEPTS; MODERNISM

The conceptual, and therefore the abstract, element of thought plays an unmistakable part in the distinction between "truth-in-itself" and truth "as a

[1] See A. Dondeyne, *Geloof en Wereld,* Antwerp and Bilthoven, 1962, 147 ff.
[2] Dondeyne, 148.

human possession." The question of how our concepts of faith are related to truth occupies a central position in the present critical stage of development in theological thought.

1. The scholastic tradition as opposed to modernism

In the scholastic tradition, especially after Scotus, the abstract character of our concepts was regarded as the reason for our being able to apply them also to transcendent, divine realities.[3] The essence of this tendency is to be found in the
[010] affirmation that our concepts are really capable, not only of reaching out for the reality of God, but also of grasping God conceptually. The same conceptual content could therefore be applied, in a proportionally analogical manner, both to the creature and to God. This view is still held even today in many scholastic circles.

In modern scholasticism, however, there has been a great deal of controversy about this centuries-old view, which has been held to be fundamentally conceptualistic. Among those who are opposed to this view are Sertillanges, Balthasar, L. de Raeymaker, and, in Holland, P. Kreling, who has furthermore come to the conclusion that it is not Thomistic. According to Aquinas, we have no concepts of God, but only creaturely concepts, which we do not, however, attribute or assign to God, but via which we reach out for God without actually grasping him conceptually.

An early radical reaction against this conceptualism came from Modernism, which demanded that more attention should be given to the inward, subjective, non-conceptual aspect of the act of faith—that is, to religious experience or the aspect of non-conceptual knowledge that is, in this view, the real core of the faith of revelation.

According to Modernism as it was synthesised by G. Tyrrell,[4] revelation was an act of God, with whom the believer came into mystical contact. This contact had no representational aspects—revelation was not, in the Modernist view, a communication of truths. This wordless and non-conceptual contact with the God of revelation was certainly spontaneously expressed and made explicit in a kind of prophetic knowledge, the elements of which were derived from the contemporary civilisation of the prophet who received the revelation, but even this first expression was no longer guaranteed by divine testimony.
[011] Theology could, in the Modernist view, only provide an interpretation of this

[3] M. Pénido's *Le rôle de l'analogie en théologie dogmatique*, Paris, 1931, is characteristic of this tendency and forms its classic expression. For a detailed treatment of our non-conceptual knowledge the reader is referred to chapter 12: "The non-conceptual intellectual dimension of our knowledge of God according to Aquinas."
[4] Especially in his book, *Through Scylla and Charybdis,* London, 1907.

prophetic content, and this theological interpretation was itself entirely dependent on the contemporary level of civilisation.

According to Modernism, religious experience, in which revelation was really accomplished, was a permanently unchangeable primordial phenomenon, occurring both within the Church of Christ and outside it. The type or norm of this experience was, however, the experience of the apostles in their direct contact with Christ. The conceptual aspect of faith simply surrounded this experience as a shield. In this way, the concepts of faith were seen as a kind of conceptual reminiscence of the religious experience of the apostles. For us they at the same time offered, as it were, an opportunity of evocation, which would permit us to arouse in ourselves an experience that was analogous to the experience of the apostles. This so-called tradition of the content of revelation was, in the Modernist view, made possible by the sense of God fundamentally possessed by every human being. The believer recognised in the Church's external preaching what he experienced inwardly. There was, however, according to the Modernists, no faith without this personal aspect of experience. In their view, then, revelation did not come from outside but was spoken into the soul by the Spirit of God, into that "fine point" of the human spirit which was receptive and listening to God. The Church's external presentation of the truths of faith was only an occasion for the experience of faith.

This, then, is the basic conception of Modernism, which is rather more subtle than some manuals suggest. It is clear that Modernism gave a certain value to the tradition that we find in Scripture and in the authentic teaching of the Church.[5] But it will also be clear that for Modernism the concepts or [012] expressions of faith do not make us grasp reality —they are simply symbolic expressions determined by existing social and historical conditions and therefore replaceable, expressions which from outside protected the real mystery that is grasped non-conceptually in the central experience of faith, and at the same time to some extent evoked it.

Tyrrell regarded his view as a middle course between extreme liberalism, which denied the continuity and the unchangeable character of dogma (maintaining that, although the object of the doctrines of faith always remained the same, doctrine itself underwent radical changes in the course of history), and what he called "scholastic formalism," which regarded closed and unrepeatable revelation as a theology in embryo from which the dogmas were dialectically deduced under the pressure of contemporary necessities.[6] Seeking a passage between this Scylla and that Charybdis, Tyrrell affirmed that

[5] See Tyrrell, 307.
[6] See Tyrrell, 116 ff.

revelation was really unchangeable (it evolved neither formally nor materially), but that all conceptual explicitation was radically changeable. The two aspects of the act of faith—the aspect of experience and the conceptual aspect—were therefore, according to Tyrrell, completely separate. The conceptual aspect was simply an extrinsic, symbolic, and pragmatic protection for the real core of faith (the so-called revelation in time consisting in this conceptual aspect).

Modernism, then, did indeed draw upon a fundamental patristic and scholastic affirmation, thus formulated by Aquinas: "faith comes in principle by infusion"; but Aquinas' equally essential complementary statement: "but in respect of its content it comes by listening and hearing,"[7] was denied, or at least
[013] interpreted in a weakened, unorthodox sense. Modernism was an attempt to grasp the core of the act of faith, but it failed at the same time to appreciate the integral essence of this act—only the aspect of inner illumination was accepted and, dissociated from the expressions of faith (the *determinatio fidei),* this was inevitably bound to result in unorthodoxy.

Nonetheless, the Modernists did discover a real problem —that of the distinction between truth in itself and truth as a spiritual possession of man.[8]

2. The discussion leading up to *Humani Generis*

The "New Theology." The problem that Modernism was unable to solve—that is, the problem of the relationship between experience and concept—has continued to be a theological issue until today.

After many honest attempts had been made to find an answer to this problem, it was eventually taken up again by Bouillard.[9] This author made a distinction, in the conceptual theological knowledge of faith, between the aspect of judgment *(affirmation),* which he regarded as unchangeable, and the aspect of representation *(representation),* which he regarded as evolving and replaceable. The constant basic affirmation was, in Bouillard's view, always contained in the continuously changing aspects of representation. Bouillard explained this by the fact that, in the evolution of one concept, all our concepts develop at the same time, but in such a way that the same original relationships
[014] continue to exist between these evolved concepts. An unchangeable truth could therefore be affirmed in and through changeable concepts. It should, however, be noted here that Bouillard was not referring directly to the dogmatic concepts of faith (these pertained to the aspect of judgment), but only to those concepts of faith that were elaborated in theology (and which consequently pertained to

[7] *4 Sent.* d. 4. q. 2, sol. 3, ad 1: "fides principaliter est ex infusione, sed quantum ad determinationem suam est ex auditu."
[8] See A. Loisy, *Autour d'un petit livre,* Paris, 1903, 190-92.
[9] H. Bouillard, *Conversion et Grace chez saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Paris, 1944, 211-24.

the aspect of representation). This fact emerged from the controversy that arose over Bouillard's publication of his views. It should also be noted that the changeable and the unchangeable aspects were not placed side by side but were to be found within each other—in other words, that the conceptual framework did not contain the judgment of faith itself, but that the reality referred to through these concepts "remains one and the same."[10]

The reaction against Bouillard's thesis, and especially that of Labourdette and M. Nicolas, was partly based on a misunderstanding of what Bouillard was in fact saying. These theologians attacked the distinction that Bouillard had made between the aspect of judgment and that of representation, seeing in it a latent agnosticism with regard to the content of faith, in view of the fact that the absolute element of the affirmation was, according to Bouillard, only attained in and through the non-absolute element of the aspects of representation. They laid stress on the fact that the God who revealed himself in human language himself guarantees the relation between the concepts of faith and the reality of salvation, and is thus himself the guarantee of the truth of the concepts of faith. Theology was, in their view, the attempt at a more precise, reflective understanding of the reality in the concepts of faith. They even went so far as to maintain that theological terminology, despite its greater flexibility, aims at unchangeability, and that the dogmatic formulation was definitive even as a formulation. [015]

In his reaction both against Bouillard and against Bouillard's opponents, Sträter said:

> The formulation of dogma always has a limited value in that it is never an adequate expression of the concept the Church wishes to express in it, and in that this concept itself does not explicitly reflect the reality in its totality. The same formulation, however, has an absolute value in that the reality itself is grasped in the concept expressed in it and in that the formulation expresses some of the reality itself.[11]

Sträter thus merely transferred the problem to the sphere of the human awareness of Christ, who communicated the reality of salvation to us in a human manner in his revelation. His views about this are valuable, but they do not contribute to the solution of the problem of experience and concept. Insofar as Sträter did provide some solution to this problem, he would seem to follow Maritain and give a certain intuitive value to the conceptual as such.[12]

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[10] H. Bouillard, "Notions conciliaires et analogie de Ia vérité," *RSR* 35 (1948), 255.
[11] C. Sträter, "De waarde der dogmatische formulering," *Jaarboek 1949 Werkgen. Kath. Theol. Nederl.*, Hilversum, 1950, 194.
[12] For this, see especially the discussion in Sträter, 198-201.

The reaction to the encyclical. Pope Pius XII defended the validity of our conceptual knowledge of God and of faith in the encyclical *Humani Generis,* which was written in reaction to the claim that our religious concepts have a purely pragmatic or symbolic meaning. This claim had not in fact been made by the theologians of the so-called new school (and in this context especially by Bouillard, whose thesis I have just discussed). But these writers had, after all, once more taken up the problem that had been left unsolved after the
[016] Modernist crisis, and had discussed this in terms which appeared to deviate markedly from the traditional scholastic view. What is more, their terseness, which often resulted in some lack of balance, had given the impression that they were giving way to a certain relativism. Reacting against this relativizing of our concepts of faith, the encyclical also affirmed that these concepts are adequately true. This does not, of course, mean that the encyclical was asserting that our concepts of faith adequately—that is, exhaustively—embraced the mystery of salvation. But, if this is taken as a starting-point, the concepts of faith remain adequately true—inadequately true concepts would, in the terminology of the encyclical, mean that these concepts did not grasp reality itself and consequently had no value for objective knowledge. But they have real objective value and this is unchangeably true, with the result that earlier definitions of faith can never become untrue later, even though these concepts may still be, as the encyclical added, refined, perfected and given new shades of meaning.

The tendency to go back to the sources, to return to the concepts of the Bible and the Fathers, was approved by the encyclical only if this attitude was not prompted by a depreciation of later conceptual formulations. The view that different, and mutually contradictory, systems together reflect the truth in a better and more adequate manner than one definite coherent system was also condemned by the encyclical.

What the encyclical was, however, basically intent throughout on stigmatising was relativism in dogma, in whatever form it appeared.

3. The relationship between experience and concept in modern Catholic Theology

[017] As we have already seen, the representational conceptualism of scholasticism subsequent to Scotus, according to which conceptual contents were directly applicable both to worldly and to supramundane realities, led to an impasse in modern neo-scholasticism. More fundamental attempts—more fundamental than, for example, the rather passing comments made by Bouillard on the affirmation of truth and its presentation already referred to—to solve the problem of the conceptual nature of our knowledge have been made in recent years. These have followed two different directions. On the one hand, there has

been the direction taken by Blondel and explicitated in Thomist perspective by Maréchal (whose work resulted in a school, among whose members I would include, for example, Karl Rahner). On the other hand, there is the direction taken by de Petter (who has been followed in the theological field by the present writer).

a. The school of Maréchal: the dynamism of the spirit.

Confronted with Kant's criticism of speculative knowledge, and under the influence, at the same time, of M. Blondel, who regarded all human knowledge as supported by affective experience, J. Maréchal, S. J.,[13] seeing the impasse into which scholastic conceptualism had got itself (for which Modernism had been unable to find a satisfactory alternative) proceeded to deny that conceptual knowledge as such, in and of itself, could reach reality. We cannot, therefore, reach God with our human concepts, because their representational content is creaturely and hence is not applicable to God. If we say God is good, then the representational content of this goodness is inevitably a creaturely goodness. How, then, can we call God good? From what does this affirmation derive its validity, in spite of the creaturely—and thus relative—character of its conceptual content? If there is to be any truth in the affirmation "God is good," an implicit confrontation must take place somewhere between creaturely [018] goodness and the reality of God.

Maréchal provided a solution to this problem by basing the reality and validity of our knowledge of God not on these concepts in themselves, but on a non-intellectual, dynamic element—the dynamism of the human spirit towards the infinite. The conceptual contents are taken up in this dynamism of the spirit, and so this conceptual content is transcended and projected towards God. Our knowledge of God is, therefore, according to Maréchal, a projective act by means of which I reach out beyond the concept in the direction of God, thanks to the dynamic impulse of the spirit which animates the concept. Man is thus able to reach towards God via the conceptual content—towards God as the aim of the human capacity to know.[14]

What is unsatisfactory about Maréchal's solution is that it does not explain the distinctive meaning of every conceptual content; that the reality and validity of knowledge is based on an extra-intellectual element; and, finally, that while it does establish that human knowledge cannot remain stationary at

[13] *Le point de départ de la métaphysique,* Louvain and Paris, 1927², Cahier I, 207 ff. See also "Le dynamisme intellectuel dans la connaissance objective," *RNP* (1927), 137-165; and *Mélanges J. Maréchal,* Brussels and Paris, 1950, pt. 1.

[14] See chapter 12: "The non-conceptual intellectual dimension in our knowledge of God according to Aquinas."

anything finite, but must always be continuing to search and to explore other territories, it does not establish that man, in his knowledge, really attains a positive and infinitive end, God himself.

b. The school of de Petter: the "non-conceptual" dimension of knowledge.

The school of de Petter is in accord with that of Maréchal in affirming that concepts as such cannot reach reality or truth, and therefore that they can do so only as elements of a greater whole. In addition, this trend of thought also affirms that a non-conceptual aspect is the basis of the validity of our conceptual knowledge. Maréchal did not, however, situate this non-conceptual
[019] aspect formally in a real intellectual element, but in an extra-intellectual element—that is, in the dynamism of the human spirit. De Petter and his followers, on the other hand, speak of a non-conceptual dimension of knowledge itself, and thus of an "objective dynamism"—that is, of an objective dynamic element in the contents themselves of our knowledge, which themselves refer to the infinite.

According to de Petter, the concept is

> ... a limited expression of an awareness of reality that is in itself unexpressed, implicit, and pre-conceptual.[15]

This pre-conceptual awareness of reality is in itself not open to appropriate expression. Our concepts refer to this non-conceptual awareness essentially as to something that they aim to express, but to which they can only give inadequate and limited expression. It is therefore not an extra-intellectual dimension—the dynamism of the human spirit—that enables us to reach reality in our concepts, but a non-conceptual consciousness through which we become aware of the inadequacy of our concepts, and thus transcend our conceptual knowledge and approach reality, although in a manner that is no longer open to expression. According to this view, the concept, or the "conceived," has the value of a definite *reference* to the reality, which is, however, not grasped or possessed by it. By virtue of the inexpressible and non-conceptual consciousness which is implied in our explicit or conceptual knowledge, or in which this conceptual knowledge is included, the concept indicates the objective direction in which reality is to be found, and—what is more—indicates a *definite* direction—the direction which is inwardly pointed
[020] out by the abstract conceptual content. Therefore, although concepts are insufficient and even do not reach reality in themselves—that is, seen in their

[15] See D. de Petter, *Begrip en werkelijkheid,* Hilversum, 1964, esp. 25-136 and 168-173.

exclusive abstract character[16] —they have a certainly inadequate but nonetheless real truth and validity as included in the non-conceptual consciousness, because they—and they alone—impart a direction and meaning to the transcending beyond the concepts to reality. Experience and conceptual thought thus together constitute our single knowledge of reality.

I have shown, in a historical study of Aquinas,[17] that he had already defended, although not in a fully elaborated manner, the proposition that we cannot apply our concepts as such to God, as though one and the same concept (goodness, for example) might analogously but equally apply both to the creature and to God, but that the conceptual content of goodness is only the perspective in which we must situate God's goodness, without knowing how this content really also applies to God. Our knowledge therefore only comes into contact with God in conscious unknowing (the wholly Other). We know that God is good, although the conceptual content of this goodness is only a creaturely goodness and the divine mode of this goodness therefore escapes us. The typical intellectual value of our conceptual knowledge of God is therefore situated in a projective act in which we reach out towards God via the conceptual contents. In this, we cannot grasp God conceptually, although we do know that he is present in the objective and definite direction that is indicated by the contents of the concept.[18] In this way, the agnosticism that is inherent in the purely symbolic value of conceptualism according to [021] Modernism (E. Le Roy) is overcome, and the older, Thomistic affirmation according to which the highest human knowledge is to be found in conscious unknowing *(theologia negativa)* is reasserted.

This applies even more to our supernatural knowledge of faith. If our concepts are, in the case of our natural knowledge of God, naturally open to the transcendent, then our natural concepts are, in the case of the concepts of faith, made open by positive revelation to the expression of supernatural truths. The God who revealed himself in human form has given a new dimension to human contents of knowledge—a new objective perspective which these contents do not in themselves have for our human intellect as such, but which they only derive from revelation and thus from the non-conceptual aspect of our act of faith. This natural intellectual content, which is included in the supernatural act of faith, directs our spirit by virtue of revelation (and thus by virtue of the non-conceptual element in the act of faith) objectively to God's intimate life, which is not attainable by purely human knowledge. Thus, the

[16] This is because what an abstract concept makes *known* is concretely, and therefore differently, realised in the concrete reality.
[17] See chapter 12: "The non-conceptual intellectual dimension in our knowledge of God according to Aquinas."
[18] See chapter 5: 'What is Theology?"

fatherhood and sonship of God, for example, are really an extension of the reality, father and son, of our human experience, but we cannot grasp conceptually the manner in which this fatherhood and sonship is realised in God. In this, our concepts of faith are not purely symbols that are interchangeable with other symbols (as the Modernists believed), nor are they a purely pragmatic knowledge in the sense that we must behave towards God as a son behaves towards his father. We do not in fact apply the purely conceptual representational content of *father* and *son* to God, but we can, by extending that and no other conceptual content (that is, father and son), really reach God. Consequently, God is in himself Father and Son, although in such a way that
[022] we cannot form any real conception of this divine fatherhood and sonship.[19] Thus mystery and objective intelligibility are intimately connected with each other.

This view provides us, in my opinion, with the true perspective within which we can affirm both the absolute character of the truth of faith and the high degree of relativity and thus of growth in our reflection about faith. And all this is contained within the one human consciousness—this is not to be reduced exclusively to conceptual knowledge.

4. The radical accentuation of the problem by Bultmann's "demythologisation"

A recent attempt to go to the root of this problem has been made by the Protestant scholar R. Bultmann with his well-known theory of demythologisation *(Entmythologisierung).*[20] The scope of this view extends beyond our problem, but its radical attitude does at the same time provide a solution to the problem of the relationship between experience and concept. Bultmann made a distinction between scientific objectivising thought and personal existential thought. In this context, the difference between what is said *(das Gesagte)* and what is intended *(das Gemeinte)* is important. That is to say, there is a distinction between the manner of presenting an affirmation and its real intention or meaning, just as there is an existentialist distinction between
[023] the mode of being of material things *(das Vorhandene* or *das Dingliche)* and the distinctive mode of existence of man *(die Existenz).* In other words, the existential is not susceptible to objectification. Thus God and the mystery of salvation can never be presented as objective. I cannot speak about God,

[19] See chapter 5, "What Is Theology?", the section on the basis of the possibility of a speculative theology.

[20] For a useful account and critique of Bultmann's views, and a select bibliography of the very considerable literature on this subject, see Joseph Bourke, "The Historical Jesus and the Kerygmatic Christ," *Conc.* I, 2 (1966), 16-26.

therefore, except insofar as *he* speaks to me here and now in my existence. We can therefore only speak about God in existential categories. Dogmatic definitions, on the other hand, are of the objective order of material things *(das Dingliche):* they are consequently, according to Bultmann's theory, unintelligible and without content.

3. THE SO-CALLED "REINTERPRETATION OF DOGMA"

The word *dogma* had various meanings in the past—it meant doctrine, opinion, edict, and so on. In Hellenistic Judaism it was also used to mean "the divine edict," that is, the Mosaic Law. But even in the patristic period, and especially from the fourth century onwards, it was applied expressly to the teaching of the christian faith, especially in contrast to the teaching of christian morals. It first acquired its now classic meaning, however, at the time of the Renaissance —every truth directly revealed, either explicitly or implicitly, by God. This truth must therefore be contained in Scripture or in unwritten tradition, and must moreover be proposed as divine revelation, to be explicitly confessed in faith by the extraordinary or the ordinary universal teaching authority of the Church. The First Vatican Council called these truths "divine and Catholic faith."[21] Only those truths of faith clearly possessing a dogmatic character were, however, called dogmas in canon law,[22] and it was moreover not always clear whether the *ordinary* universal teaching authority of the Church aimed to [024] propose a doctrine precisely as a revealed truth. For these reasons, it gradually came about that an even stricter, narrower meaning was given to dogma. In this stricter sense, only a truth revealed by God and as such solemnly defined by the Church's *extraordinary* teaching authority was called a dogma. Actually, however, this distinction is arbitrary. The very fact that a revealed truth is proposed by the Church's teaching authority makes it a dogma. Dogmas are therefore the Church's authentic expressions of a reality of revelation.

The Church's expressions, however, conceal a double relationship—that towards the contemporary situation in the Church, and that towards the original faith of the primitive Church made present in the experience of faith. In other words, in dogma the original apostolic experience of faith is heard at a particular time and in a particular situation in the Church. This living context does not distort the original faith, but allows it to be heard in a pure way precisely at this particular time. *Dogma* is therefore always an expression by the Church of the whole Church's experience of faith as this is made present again and again from the apostles' faith and throughout the history of the Church. A

[21] DS 3011 (= DR 1792).
[22] *CIC* 1323, para. 3.

dogma is thus a new formulation, relating to a particular situation, of the mystery of salvation experienced in the Church— the experience of faith itself in a particular phase of ecclesiastical expression. In this sense, the special formulation, as the expression of the mystery of faith, *belongs with* the object of faith,[23] if the reservation is made that consent in faith to the dogma does not have the formulation itself as its end, but—via the dogma—the reality of the God of revelation.[24] Since the saving value of faith is based on its value as
[025] reality or truth, the dogmatic formulation itself, as the Church's actualised experience of faith, also has, in principle, a religious significance.

This religious value of dogma was made even more explicit in the scholastic definition of dogma, that is, in the teaching of the article of faith (the *articulus fidei).* Aquinas especially regarded the dogmas as the central truths of faith which directly concerned the religious salvation of men and in relation to which all the other subordinate truths of faith were arranged.[25] In his view, the dogmas were the central truths of christianity. The difference between the medieval and the modern concept of dogma is therefore that for Aquinas the dogmatic character of a truth of faith was clear from the inner structure of the content of faith, whereas modern theologians base this dogmatic character on the Church's definition of a revealed truth. The two insights are therefore complementary.

If we now look at the relationship of dogma to the mystery of salvation itself, it will be clear that, in the dogma, the mystery of faith is expressed in human concepts that can never be sufficient to convey the whole mystery. The dogma reflects the reality for salvation of the content of revelation from a particular point of view of the Church, and therefore insofar as this reality which is known by us in faith is conceptually and figuratively expressed in concepts and ideas of faith.

What is meant, therefore, by a dogmatic definition is the affirmation in faith of a saving reality together with the entire representational structure. The strictly conceptual aspect of this structure is its sharply defined intellectual aspect, which is, however, at the same time a part of the wider background of a historically conditioned world of ideas. A subtle distinction has therefore to be
[026] made in the definition of any dogma between the real essence of the dogmatic affirmation—that is, what is necessary if we are to move towards the inexpressible content of faith in a true and authentic way—and the secondary aspects relating to the form in which the definition is couched. In making this distinction, however, we must bear in mind that no pure formulation,

[23] Aquinas, *ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 2; *Verit.* q. 14, a. 8, ad 5.
[24] *ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2.
[25] *ST* II-II, q. 1, a. 6.

independent of human concepts, of the apostolic truth can ever be reached, but that this absolute truth can always only be seen in conceptual terms, with the result that the absolute and relative aspects of dogma can never be placed exactly side by side. Our movement towards the reality of salvation by means of dogma has to be satisfied with imperfect concepts. It is therefore impossible to separate the experience and the conceptual framework of faith. What is more, as the absolute core of faith, towards which we move in these concepts, is also expressed in and mixed with the kind of presuppositions that are already present in men's minds at the time, there are, in certain dogmatic formulations, representational aspects which are entirely conditioned by the prevailing historical situation and which can consequently be changed at a later period. Human experience, precise scientific data, and similar factors can help to purify the way in which dogma is presented. An example of this is the idea of Christ's ascension, the representation of which was formerly connected in the minds of the faithful with the ancient view of the world. What was only a mode of expression in the implicit intention of the definition was automatically conceived in the minds of the faithful as forming part of what was itself expressed or affirmed.

The dogmatic meaning continues unchanged whenever these older forms of expression are changed. The study of the growth of various dogmas reveals quite clearly that developments have in fact taken place by progressive explicitation and that these developments have given rise to new definitions, [027] that have—within the limits of the unchangeable unity of dogmatic meaning—been more explicit than earlier insights. There have also been developments in the history of dogma that have taken place, so to speak, by a process of breaking off. This does not mean that part of the original meaning may have ceased to apply, but that the original meaning has eventually been freed from the confused terminology of the historical situation in which it had developed. It is furthermore quite clear that, before this purification, the Catholic faith was not explicitly conscious of the fact that the (obsolete) view of man and the world in which these dogmas were thought out was not really important to what the dogmas were actually stating. In the initial period, when no distinction was made, the Church automatically spoke—as did all the faithful—as if the mode of expression formed part of the essence of dogma, without meaning this expressly, however, or even being able to mean it. It is only when new human experience or new positive data explicitly raise the question of the distinction between the content of faith and its form that it is possible to see clearly whether the so-called form of expression is simply a mode of representing the dogma or whether it forms an essential part of the dogmatic content.

The reinterpretation of dogma can therefore have both an orthodox and an unorthodox significance. If the aim of this reinterpretation is to purify our insights into faith of their earlier, and now obsolete, forms of expression (for example, to dissociate the ascension of Christ from the Ptolemaic cosmology) it will have an orthodox Catholic meaning, and what was originally intended through the use of this older form of representation will remain inviolably true. A truth can also be expressed in forms which are in themselves incorrect, but which are able, in a given social situation, very suggestively to formulate the
[028] envisaged truth. Whenever anyone says, "I love you, my angel," although he does not mean that the woman he loves is really an angel, what he says does suggest a deep reality. In different cultural situations, however, such expressions may be quite meaningless.

The reinterpretation of dogma may also mean not only that the fringe of ideas representing the conceptual structure of the dogma in its historical setting is cut off, but also that this conceptual structure—insofar as this truly, if not exhaustively, expresses the reality of salvation—is itself presented in a more subtly shaded manner. This may occur, for example, when existential ideas are used instead of physical concepts. It is precisely because our knowledge is always gained from approaching the reality of salvation from a definite standpoint or perspective that this truly constant insight can be integrated into a higher insight or augmented by complementary insights when it is viewed from different standpoints. What has once been declared a dogma can never be revoked, but it can certainly be integrated into newer insights in which its life really continues, even though this may be in a different perspective. In this connection, however, it is important to bear in mind that the new insights are not extrinsic to the older definitions, added to them as appendices, but that the truths seen earlier have been thought out again in the new insights. Finally, it should be quite clear that the reinterpretation of dogma will have an unorthodox significance if the view is accepted that this reinterpretation is possible and necessary because our concepts have a merely symbolic and pragmatic value.

These views may be said to be more or less generally accepted throughout the theological world of Western Europe. They have not, however, been
[029] accepted by a group of scholastic theologians who continue to regard human knowledge in rigidly conceptualistic terms, and who confuse the unchangeable character of truth with a representational view of human concepts. The representatives of this movement are obviously still (unjustifiably) afraid that, when all is said and done, the other movement does make concessions to relativism. In fact, all that this new movement seeks to do is to stress the way in which human—and therefore limited— knowledge can be directed towards the absolute truth—in other words, it emphasises the sense in which our

knowledge is not relative, in spite of its constitutional limitations. What we are in fact witnessing here is the confrontation between what are, so to speak, two distinct spiritual worlds within the one Catholic faith.[26] The one tendency can readily adopt, at least in practice, the attitude that our human concepts are capable of containing the whole of reality and that we especially who are believers have a monopoly on truth. But the other tendency, when it is misapprehended or presented in an oversimplified form, can in fact court a hidden relativism.

[26] See my collections of articles: *Vatican II: the Struggle of Minds,* Dublin, 1963; and *Vatican II: the Real Achievement,* London and New York, 1967.

Chapter 12

THE NON-CONCEPTUAL INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION IN OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD ACCORDING TO AQUINAS*

1. THE PROBLEM

The objective value of our knowledge of God is, according to a Thomist view subsequent to Scotus, based on the abstract character of what are called "transcendental concepts." In the words of Pénido, whose work is typical of this tradition and has become its classic expression:

> The concept is absolute and attributable to God because it is abstract. At the same time, however, it enables us to know about God simply what he has proportionately in common with his creatures.[1]

This tendency calls the *transcendentalia,* like every concept, a *universale,* but they are characterized by the fact that their unity does not constitute a *univocum,* but a *universale proportionale.* In other words, it constitutes a *ratio abstracta* which nonetheless includes, in an actual (although implicit) way, the creaturely and the divine modes of realisation, so that the concept itself is called analogical in the manner of a *proportionalitas.* The unity of the analogical concept is called a *unum secundum quid* and a *diversum simpliciter,* or, in accordance with Suarez' [158] interpretation, *simpliciter unum, secundum quid diversum.* As a result, when we think or speak about God, we no longer really use creaturely concepts, but *grasp*

* Remark from the editors: In the English publication of 1968, this fundamental study was thought to demand so much from the reader that it was banished to an "Appendix". In these *Collected Works of Edward Schillebeeckx*, we have placed it once again as envisaged by the autor as a contribution to Part 3: "The value of our speech about God and our concepts of faith". With this choice we follow the Dutch original *Theologie en Openbaring* of 1964.

[1] M. Pénido, *Le rôle de l'analogie en théologie dogmatique*, Paris, 1931, 123.

God himself notionally in and through the proportionally one, transcendental, but nonetheless abstract, concepts.[2]

Pénido's contention gave rise to a good deal of controversy, led by Descoqs, Sertillanges, Blanche, Balthasar, Valensin, and de Raeymaeker. The problem was narrowed down to the question as to whether the *analogia proportionalitatis propriae* too included a prime analogate. All the arguments against Pénido took the same basic assumption as their starting-point, namely, that the analogical unity was a conceptual unity, and from that point questioned the implication of an *analogia attributions intrinsecae* in the so-called "proper analogy" of Cajetan.

The first epistemologically critical study of these findings was made by Maréchal.[3] He started from the Kantian view that a speculative, intuitive grasp of reality is impossible if the human intellect is not essentially intuitive—in whatever way, provided only that this intuition is an *intellectual* intuition. This led him to the necessity of a critical justification of the traditional doctrine of analogy.

> For, if the claim is made that the transcendental relationship of analogy is known, and if a legitimate raising of the "signification" of certain privileged concepts above the level of what these concepts "represent" is regarded as possible, then the higher term of the analogy (the *analogatum princeps)*—the transcendent object "signified," although not "represented" in its proper form —must, by virtue of the Thomist theory of knowledge, *be in some way present in us.* If it is not "represented" in us in its proper form, how then is it present to us? How can it be grasped by our thought?[4]

[159]

This is an accurate statement of the essence of the problem. Denying that it is possible for us to grasp God purely conceptually—even in the so-called *perfectiones simplices,* or transcendental perfections, our representation remains creaturely—Maréchal asked how we can achieve a real knowledge of God, a knowledge that brings us into contact with him as a reality.

> That God is "being" purely and simply and that the creature is "being" and "essence"—what does this mean except that God cannot, properly speaking, be *represented* by any of our objective concepts? For every objective concept marks off the limits of an "essence" (and even implies a representation drawn from sense

[2] One typical and classic passage should suffice: "No theological research can achieve successful results—escaping from metaphorism and anthropomorphism—unless we accept straight away, in our mind, a capacity for abstraction which allows us to think in transcendental terms. The transcendental idea of goodness is no longer formally (but only proportionately) the concept of created goodness, and it is this idea which we apply proportionally to God. It is in and through this universal idea that we know subsistent goodness" (Pénido, 189).

[3] J. Maréchal, *Le point de départ de la métaphysique,* Louvain and Paris, 1920ff. (five volumes).

[4] J. Maréchal, *Point de départ,* I, 19272, 207-208. See also Maréchal, "Le dynamisme intellectuel dans la connaissance objective," *RNP* 29 (1927) 137-165; and *Mélanges J. Maréchal* (Museum Lessianum, Sect. Philos., n. 31), I, Brussels and Paris 1950.

> experience).[5]

The fact that we work with creaturely concepts in our knowledge of God, but consequently subject these concepts continuously to the correction of the *via negationis et eminentiae,* of necessity implies at least a latent comparison between God and the creature.

> It is here that we touch the most delicate point of analogical knowledge. We can compare God and the creature in a very real sense, without knowing him directly in himself.[6] [160]

Having established this, Maréchal stated the inescapable dilemma: *either* our knowledge is (as knowledge) dependent on our senses, in which case it cannot be intuitive and is purely notional; *or* our intellectual knowledge is, in one way or another, intuitive, in which case it is (as knowledge) not dependent on our senses.[7] Influenced by Kant's approach to the problem, Maréchal denied the existence of intellectual intuition and consequently, in accordance with Kant's *practical* reason, and probably also under the inspiration of Maurice Blondel, based the real, noetic value of our knowledge of God on an aspect that is not formally noetic, since he denied both intellectual intuition and the ability of purely notional knowledge to come into contact with reality.

> We are therefore led to postulate, in our objective knowledge, something other than the static reception and the abstractive analysis of "data." We are constrained to *postulate a movement of thought* which would constantly carry us beyond what is still representable by concepts, to postulate a kind of meta-empirical anticipation which would show us the objective capacity of our intelligence, expanding infinitely until it overcomes all the limitations of being. Apart from that, there is no analogical knowledge of the transcendent. . . . Only an "internal finality" of the intelligence can make it go constantly beyond the present object and seek infinitely a more inclusive object.[8]

The objective and real value of our knowledge of God is thus explained by the dynamism, *not of the content* of our awareness of being, but of the knowing subject. The conceptual is surmounted, not by a non-conceptual, *noetic* contact of the spirit with God, but by the dynamism of the spirit—by my ascertaining that the movement of my spirit again and again goes further than the conceptual content. The dynamic impulse of the spirit is therefore first grasped here, so that the contact with reality makes itself felt *in it.* To recognise the *finitum* as *finitum* means that a comparison is present between the given [161]

[5] *Point de départ*, V, 1926, 183.
[6] *Point de départ*, V, 184.
[7] See especially Maréchal, "Abstraction ou Intuition," *RNP* 31 (1929), 27-52, 121-147, and 309-342; or *Mélanges,* I, 102-180.
[8] *Point de départ*, V, 185.

conceptual content and the limitless character of the impulse of the spirit, which constantly goes beyond the conceptual in the direction of the mystery that is thereby attained but not conceptually grasped. Contained in every knowledge of a creaturely datum there is consequently, as an active experience, an implicit knowledge of God. There is, in the concept, always *more* than the concept itself, more than the conceptual aspect of representation. This is the dynamism of the *voluntas in ratione,* from which the concept arose and through which the intellect moves towards God. The concept is therefore borne up by the dynamism of the spirit and, as a result, projected towards the Infinite. The act of projection, by means of which I rise above the concept and tend towards God, is thus based in the impulse of the spirit, which penetrates the concept, with the result that God is approached, by way of the conceptual content, as the *finis intellectus.*

This is clearly a determined effort to rise above purely notional knowing. The question is, however, whether this does not mark a departure from the standpoint of the intellectual knowledge of God, or whether it does not mean a denial of the strictly noetic value of a real, objective contact with God. The second would, of course, amount to a surrender of a metaphysics of reality. Maréchal, however, considered his thesis to be based on Aquinas's works, and
[162] for this reason it has seemed to me to be profitable to find out to what extent Aquinas himself accepted an aspect in our knowledge of God that transcends our concepts, and whether he looked for this non-conceptual dimension in the dynamism of the spirit or in a certain objective dynamism of the content of being which is not open to concepts as such. It may at the same time become clear to what extent the historical teaching of Aquinas differs from the later Thomist tradition influenced by Scotus.

2. THE "ACTUS SIGNIFICANDI" TRANSCENDS THE "RATIO CONCEPTA"

I shall first of all consider the conceptual dimension of our knowledge of God, in order to see whether, and in what way, real contact with God goes beyond our concepts.

1. The conceptual dimension of our knowledge of God

Aquinas shows in *ST* I, q. 12, a. 12 how creatures are always the basis of human knowledge of God, so that all that we can attain of God is what creatures tell us about him. Aquinas distinguishes three complementary aspects in this theophany. In his view, the theophany or creatureliness[9] implies: (1) the

[9] In this chapter I am concerned, not to argue the proof of God, but with the already established proof of God.

habitudo Dei ad creaturas, or, more correctly, the *habitudo creaturarum ad Deum,* which forms the basis of the *via affirmationis;* (2) the *differentia creaturarum ab ipso,* through which God's complete difference from the world of creatures is affirmed: "he is not of those things which are caused by him,"[10] with the result that the affirmation is continually corrected by the *via negationis vel remotionis;* [163] and (3) the affirmation of the fullness of being of the divine being-Other: "these things are not separated from him by any deficiency in him, but because he transcends them,"[11] that is, the supreme check on the negative correction of the *via affirmationis* exercised by the *via eminentiae.* This tripartite division is a constant feature in all Aquinas's works,[12] and he summarizes it like this: "We know God ... as *cause* and by his *transcendence* and by his *utter difference.*"[13] These are three inseparable aspects of causality, in which the effect is no different from the act itself of the cause in the other, so that the effect as such is *participative* the act of the cause itself.[14] *Participatio obiectiva* and *participatio causalis* are thus always essentially connected in Aquinas.[15] The participational character of the effect in respect of its cause consequently implies a *similitudo,* which is naturally accompanied by a basic *dissimilitudo:* "in the effect is found something by means of which it is assimilated to its cause and something by means of which it differs from its cause."[16] Because it is only received, and thus [164] because of its deficiency, the effect is really distinct from its cause, but not because of what it is positively, since it derives its perfection as such purely from its cause and consequently cannot be *opposed* to it. Assuming this *basis* of distinction, however, the effect is also distinct from its cause in what it is positively. Causality therefore means a single act in two subjects. In the fullest sense, this means *being* the act and, as far as the effect is concerned, *having* or deriving the act.

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[10] *ST* I, q. 12, a. 12: "ipse non est aliquid eorum quae ab eo causantur."
[11] *ST* I, q. 12, a. 12: "haec non removentur ab eo propter eius defectum, sed quia excedit."
[12] See, for example: *ST* I, q. 13, a. 1; q. 13, a. 8, ad 2; q. 13, a. 10, ad 5; *BT* q. 6, a. 2 (ed. Marietti 1954, 384); q. 1, a. 2 (322); q. 1, a. 4 (326); *ST* I, q. 84, a. 7, ad 3: *ER* c. 1, lect. 6 (ed. Marietti 1953, 22 *n.* 115); etc.
[13] *ST* I, q. 84, a. 7, ad 3: "Deum cognoscimus . . . ut causam et per excessum et per remotionem."
[14] *SCG* III, c. 69: "derivatio boni unius in alterum" ("the diverting of the good of one man to another"); *ST* I, q. 62. a. 9, ad 2; *Quodl.* 12, q. 5, a. 1: "participat actum superiorem" ("it participates in the higher act").
[15] This accounts for Aquinas's characteristic term *principium efficiens exemplare,* by which the efficiency and the objective participation are expressed *per modum unius.* See *1 Sent.* d. 8, q. 1, a. 3, ad 2; d. 38, q. 1, a. 1; d. 19, q. 5, a. 2; *Verit.* q. 1, a. 8, ad 7; etc.
[16] *Potent,* q. 7. a. 5, ad 8: "in effectu invenitur aliquid per quod assimilatur suae causa e et aliquid per quod a sua causa differt." The deficiency, however, comes from the creature itself—see *I Sent.* d. 2, q. 1, a. 2, c, and especially *ST 1 I-II,* q. 161, a. 3: "In nomine duo possunt considerari, scilicet id quod est Dei et id quod est hominis. Hominis autcm est quidquid pertinet ad defectum, sed Dei est quidquid pertinet ad salutem et perfectionem" ("Two factors may be considered in man, namely, that which is of God and that which is of man. All that pertains to deficiency is of man, whereas all that pertains to salvation and perfection is of God").

In the case of creative causality, it is a question of complete dependence. The *aliquid simile* and the *aliquid dissimile* do not point to two partial aspects—they are both total aspects. But this means that the intrinsic nature of the cause, seen from the point of view of the effect, dissolves into mystery. In those texts in which he was free from the influence of Avicenna's essentialism, Aquinas strongly emphasised the fact that the creature is constituted by God according to *existence* and *content* (essence).

> From that which is added to the content as its existence, we say that not only is the existence created, but the content itself; for before it has existence, it is nothing, unless perhaps in the intellect of its creator, where it is not a creature, but a creative essence.[17]

[165] I agree with van Boxtel's interpretation of Aquinas,[18] when he says that the *actus essendi* inwardly constitutes the content or essence of Aquinas's later works, so that the act of existence is not seen as a state that has been externally added to something which in itself already possesses intelligible value. The essence is only a definite mode of existence— *this* existence. In this respect, the distinction between *an sit Deus* and *quid sit Deus* is to some extent misleading. The divine existence itself is the supreme intelligible content. This implies that the inability to know the *quid Dei* at the same time and in the same degree includes the inability to know the *existence* of God. Aquinas therefore does not shrink from saying, after the *quinque viae,* that "we cannot know God's existence."[19] The *actus essendi,* which constitutes the *quid Dei,* escapes us. In our natural knowledge of God, we are therefore bound to the dynamism of the world of creatures which reveals God to us, with the result that our terrestrial knowledge of God appears to be more a knowledge of the mysterious intelligibility of the creature than a knowledge of God as such.

[166] It will be quite clear from this that Aquinas unmistakably leaves room for the conceptual aspect in our knowledge of God. Because we know God from and in the created world, the conceptual content of this knowledge of God has a bearing on this creaturely reality:

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[17] *Potent,* q. 3, a. 5, ad s: "Ex hoc ipso quod quidditati esse attribuitur, non solum esse, sed ipsa quidditas creari dicitur: quia antequam esse habeat, nihil est, nisi forte in intellectu creantis, ubi non est creatura, sed creatrix essentia."

[18] J. van Boxtel, "Existentie en waarde in de eerste werken van de H. Thomas van Aquino," *TP* 10 (1948), 221-288; "Existentie en waarde in de latere werken van de H. Thomas van Aquino," *TP* 12 (1950), 59-133; "Metaphysiek van het wezen of metaphysiek van het zijn?", *Verslag Veren. v. Thom.,* Utrecht and Brussels, 1951, 1-17. I am of the opinion, however, that the abandonment of essentialism was not a definitive achievement in the historical Thomism, since it is always possible to detect essentialist echoes even in Aquinas's later works, even though these generally occur under the pressure of current philosophical formulae.

[19] *ST* I, q. 3, a. 4, ad 2: "Primo igitur modo accipiendo esse (that is, as the *actus essendi)* non possumus scire esse Dei, *sicut nec* eius essentiam" ("thus in the first sense in which we take existence, we cannot know God's existence, any more than we can know his essence").

> When our intellect knows God from his creatures, for the purpose of understanding God it forms *concepts proportioned to the perfections* which proceed from God to his creatures.[20]

The conceptual representations that are included in our knowledge of God are creaturely, and not concepts of God. Aquinas explicitly draws attention to the fact that, even in and through the supra-predicamental perfections—the *perfectiones simpliciter simplices* of later scholasticism—we possess no real ideas of God. Although these perfections do not, in their content, intrinsically include a limited creaturely mode of being, we nonetheless encounter them only as limited realisations. Conceptually, we cannot imagine these perfections without a definite creaturely mode: "although it is *always* appropriate that the intellect should perceive a creaturely mode in that which is conjointly signified."[21] This means that our intellectual knowledge of God is not possible apart from the conceptual aspect—that our verification of the existence of God of necessity implies a human conceptual aspect. The conceptual representation of, for example, God's goodness is, as a representation, a representation of a creaturely goodness —we have no other conceptual representation. The fact, however, that we can make a significant distinction between the predicamental and the transcendental perfections[22] (although, when we encounter the latter, they are [167] realised only in a creaturely mode, and we can only express them with the *modus creaturae* in which they present themselves to us), makes us aware that in our conceptual awareness something is implied that provides us with an objective perspective onto the *significatum* as this is realised in God.

2. The "*actus significandi*" and the "*ratio concepta*"

Although Aquinas on the one hand affirms that our knowledge of God includes conceptual aspects, he is on the other hand quite conscious of the fact that knowledge cannot be purely conceptual thought. The texts in which he attempts to define the *similitudo* of the creature to God more precisely are very suggestive in this context. They amount basically to a recognition that our knowledge of the created *similitudo* cannot be defined more precisely in concepts; in other words, that our awareness of it rises above all specifically and even generically defining knowledge expressed in concepts. This is shown *ex professo* in *ST* I, q. 4, a. 3. Accepting as his starting-point the view that causality is a *communicatio propriae perfectionis* by which a single act is realised in two

[20] *ST* I, q. 13, a. 4: "Intellectus autem noster cum cognoscat Deum ex creaturis, format ad intelligendum Deum conceptiones proportionates perfectionibus procedentibus a Deo in creaturas."
[21] *1 Sent.* d. 22, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2: "quamvis oporteat in consignificato semper modum creaturae accipere ex parte intellectus."
[22] See especially *ST* I, q. 13, a. 3, ad 1; *1 Sent.* d. 22, q. 1, a. 2; *SCG* I, c. 30.

subjects, as giving and as obtained, Aquinas attempts to sound more accurately the depths of our explicit knowledge of the extent of the participation in the effect. In those cases where the *similitudo* goes back to a "sharing in the same *form* of the same *type* and to the same extent,"[23] Aquinas calls the *similitudo* "most perfect" *(perfectissima),* because it points to a conceptual knowledge in which the same content is attributed univocally to different things. In addition,
[168] he refers to those cases in which the *similitudo* is "a sharing in the same form of the same type, but not to the same extent, but rather to a greater or lesser."[24] This *communicatio formae* points, in Aquinas's view, only to a *similitudo imperfecta,* which he regards as the real basis for a certain form of analogical predication which he calls the "analogy of two (or more) things to a third thing"[25]—that is, the predication of a definite conceptual content to different things on the basis of a "conformity in one thing which is in conformity with the others both before and after."[26] In this case, the *similitudo* is reciprocal. Finally, Aquinas referred to cases of *similitudo* which he is no longer able to define conceptually because they cannot be grasped in specifically or even in generically defined, predicamental concepts. Medieval philosophy spoke here of *causae aequivocae,* where effects derive from a cause that is in an absolute way a *causa prima* at least in a definite sector of being. Aquinas's metaphysics, which was conditioned by the views of antiquity and orientated by cosmology, leads him to distinguish two cases of *similitudo* that cannot be accurately located by conceptual knowledge. In the first of these cases —"sharing the same form, not of the same specific type, but of the same generic likeness"[27]—he refers to sublunary physical events which were regarded in the medieval world as subject to the simultaneous causality of the celestial bodies, the so-called "physical first causes." The likeness between an effect of this kind and its
[169] ultimate physical cause is seen by Aquinas to be real, but so minimal that our conceptual knowledge is only able to provide a generic description of it. I have only quoted this medieval example in order to situate the last case of *similitudo* more clearly. This is the *similitudo* of the creature to God—the "likeness" that has its origins in God's complete and absolute causality. Aquinas does not call it a participation in the form of the same type, species or genus; it is said to be "a

[23] *ST* I, q. 4, a. 3: "[communicare] in eadem forma secundum eandem rationem et secundum eundem modum."
[24] *ST* I, q. 4, a. 3: "[communicare] in eadem forma secundum eandem rationem, sed non secundum eundem modum, sed secundum magis et minus."
[25] *ST* I, q. 4, a. 3: "analogia duorum (vel plurium) ad aliquid tertium."
[26] *ST* I, q. 4, a. 3: "convenientia in aliquo uno quod cis per prius et posted us convenit." See also *I Sent.* d. 35, q. 1, a. 4 (ed. Mandonnet, 820).
[27] *ST* I, q. 4, a. 3: "[communicare in eadem forma] non secundum eandem Tationem speciei [sed secundum eandem similitudinem generis]."

participation according to a certain kind of analogy."[28] In this case Aquinas regards the *similitudo* not only as not reciprocal,[29] but also, though real, as "very slight."[30] It is, in his opinion, such that not only is it impossible to grasp it in specifically defined concepts, but it escapes even the final, minimal possibility of abstract understanding—generic definition. Aquinas means by this that it is not conceivable in concepts, that it cannot be understood or grasped conceptually:

> A creature represents God and is similar to him insofar as it possesses a certain perfection; not however in such a manner that it represents him as something of the same species or genus, but rather as a surpassing principle, whose form the effects fall short of, but nevertheless with which the effects attain a certain likeness.[31]

Aquinas therefore affirms on the one hand that we know that a likeness exists between the creature and God, and on the other hand that this creaturely [170] likeness escapes the grasp of our specific, and even of our merely generic, conceptual knowledge. It is, in his view, impossible to grasp this *similitudo* conceptually. The importance of this affirmation is that it is precisely *this* similitude (as the essential aspect of dependence on God or absolute participation) which, according to Aquinas, forms the basis of the objective value of our knowledge of God. The really existing *similitudo* of the creature to God is therefore an immanent *beyond* of our predicamental and conceptual knowledge. It is an intellectual content which is, however, at the same time not confined by any specific and generic limitations. The "likeness" of the creature to its creator is not a "*definite* proportion or measure," because, though there is a real likeness, the *dissimilitudo* is infinitely great and God is incomparable.[32] All our representations of God derived from the created world can certainly *signify* God, "but not definitively or exhaustively."[33] In other words, we have no adequate *ratio* of God's perfection—we have no proper concepts of God. "No creature has such a relationship to God that by it he is able to give content to the divine perfection."[34] In view of the fact that our speaking about God is only the

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[28] *ST* I, q. 4, a. 5: "[participatio] formae . . . secundum candem rationem speciei vel generis, sed secundum aliqualem analogiam."

[29] See *ST* I, q. 4, a. 3, ad 4: "Nullo modo concedendum est quod Deus sit similis creaturae" ("in no way may we concede that God is similar to his creature"). See also the same doctrine in *1 Sent.* d. 35, q. 1, a. 4, ad 6 (ed. Mandonnet, 821).

[30] *Verit.* q. 2, a. 3, ad 9: "similitudo realis, sed minima."

[31] *ST* I, q. 13, a. 2: "Quaelibet creatura in tantum Eum repraesentat et est Ei similis, in quantum pcrfectionem aliquam habet; non tamen ita quod ropraesentet Eum sicut aliquid ciusdem speciei vel generis, sed sicut excellens prineipium, a cuius forma effectus deficiunt, cuius tamen aliqualem similitudinem effectus consequuntur."

[32] *DN* c. 9, lect. 3 (ed. Marietti 1950, 312): "deterrainata proportio seu mensura."

[33] *Potent,* q. 7, a. 5, ad 9: "sed non definitive vel circumscriptive."

[34] *Verit.* q. 2, a. 11: "Nulla creatura habet talem habitudinem ad Deum per quam possit divina perfectio determinari."

verbal expression or putting into words of the conceptual ideas that we derive from our knowledge of creatures, the *ratio nominis* or the conceptual content goes back directly to the creature. The *res significata per nomen* transcends the *res ut concepta* (or the *ratio nominis* or the *significatio nominis).* Nowhere does
[171] Aquinas assert that the *significatio* transcends the *repraesentatio,* because, with him, *significatio* always means the conceptual content. But the reality signified or referred to transcends the conceptual content:

> The reality signified transcends the conceptual content of the name.[35] These names [that is, those which are used absolutely of God, although their constant point of support for our knowledge is in the creature] are not used to signify these processes . . . but to signify the very principle of things, just as in him life pre-exists, though in a more excellent manner than we can understand or signify.[36]

The absolute names of God signify or refer to God in himself, but via the intermediary signification of the conceptual content derived from the creature. "The reality is signified by the name [or term] via the concept or content, i.e., via the signification [that is, conceptual content] of the name [or term]."[37] The *res significata* and the *res concepta* were not simply identical in historical Thomism. The *act of signifying* goes further than the *ratio nominis,* but it exceeds this *ratio* in the direction indicated by its content itself, in such a way that the reality is really envisaged, but not conceptually grasped. The fact that this act of signifying goes further than the conceptual representation was seen by Aquinas to be based on the creature's natural, objective pointing to God, although this objective tendency escapes our precise conceptual definition. Even though we therefore cannot really abstract the creaturely mode of the so-called
[172] transcendental perfections from their deepest inner meaning—with the result that we cannot attribute this mode and this concept to God—it would nonetheless seem that Aquinas was affirming that we do not surrender the entire content of knowledge with our denial of the creaturely mode of these perfections (which we furthermore know only as realised creaturally). Our real knowledge of God, however, cannot be a purely explicit or conceptual knowledge.

There is, moreover, a certain fluctuation in Aquinas's statements. In some places, he called the *ratio nominis* or the conceptually represented content the

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[35] *ST* I, q. 13, a. 5: "Res significata excedit significationem nominis."
[36] *ST* I, q. 13, a. s, ad 2: "Haec nomina non imponuntur ad significandum ipsos processus, . . . sed ad significandum ipsum rerum principium, prout in eo praeexistit vita, licet eminentiori modo quam intelligatur vel significetur."
[37] "Res significatur per nomen mediante conceptione seu ratione, i.e. per nominis significationem." This is the fundamental doctrine of the whole of *ST* I, q. 13; see a. 4, ad 1 and a. 1.

basis of our affirmative *nomina divina.*[38] In other places, however, he situated the *ratio nominis* on the side of the *modus significandi* and the *impositio nominis (ex creaturis):* "*Res* nominis (de Deo et creaturis dicti) per prius est in Deo secundum suum modum; sed *ratio* nominis per posterius."[39] The latter is more in keeping with Aquinas's constant doctrine that we have no real concepts of God and that the representations with which we work in our explicit knowledge of God are creaturely representations. In any event, *ratio nominis* always means the *conceptual* content in his case, and this always goes back to the creatural perfections. This means that the *ratio nominis* as the conceptual content cannot be identified with the noetic encounter with the *significatum.* These differing statements (on the one hand, "ratio nominis *per posterius* est in Deo" and, on the other, "ratio nominis… *per prius* [est] in Deo") are clearly reconciled in the [173] *Scriptum:* "Illa *ratio* …per prius in Deo, per posterius in creaturis *existens.*"[40] The word *existens* here shows that *ratio* should be interpreted in this context not formally as *ratio* or the conceptually represented content of knowledge, but as the realised content. "Ratio…existens" in this context therefore refers to the "res *significata* per rationem." This shows that, in Aquinas's view, the transcendental perfections retain their full transcendental character only if they are not simply regarded as *ratio,* since they must then of necessity be situated among the predicamental perfections and cannot consequently, as conceptual content, be "per prius de Deo dicta." We are thus confronted with the problem as stated by Maréchal, that a conceptual content as such can never be ascribed to God—the *conceptual* content of "goodness" is a representation of creaturely goodness. And yet Aquinas did call God formally and absolutely good. The divine mode of goodness escapes our conceptual representation, but this mode *is* God himself and not, so to speak, a mode added to the creaturely representation of goodness. It is also not creaturely goodness from which we would actually have succeeded in eliminating the creaturely mode so that a concept of "divine goodness," purified to the utmost degree, would be left to us. ". . . Oporte(a)t in consignificato *semper* modum creaturae accipere ex parte intellectus."[41] There must therefore be more than purely conceptual knowledge. Simply notional knowledge seemed to Aquinas to lead only to agnosticism because, after completing the *via negationis et eminentiae,* the conceptual content of our divine

[38] In Thomas's view, there was, in the *content* of our awareness, as far as the so-called transcendental perfections are concerned, something that we predicate *proprie* of God and even *per prius* (I, q. 13, a. 3), at least "quantum ad rem significatam, licet non quantum ad modum significandi" (*In 1 Sent.* d. 22, q. 1, a. 2). Thomas consequently maintained, like the *Graeci,* that even these perfections could be both denied of God and affirmed. In *SCG* I, c. 30 fin., he elucidated this claim thus: "affirmari quidem propter nominis rationem; negari vero propter significandi modum."

[39] *SCG* I, 34.

[40] *In 1 Sent.* d. 22, q. 1, a. 2, ad 3.

[41] *In 1 Sent.* d. 22, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2.

names still continues to be creaturely. We are not left with a *ratio* in which the creaturely mode is absent or, in the Scotist view, neutral with respect to a
[174] limited or unlimited possibility of realisation. The concept as such is still a creaturely concept. "Ut sic post omne quod intellectus noster ex creaturis manuductus de Deo *concipere* potest, hoc ipsum quod Deus est remaneat occultum et ignotum. Non solum enim Deus non est lapis aut sol, . . . sed nec est talis vita aut essentia, *qualis* ab intellectu nostro *concipi* potest; et sic hoc ipsum quod Deus est, cum excedat omne illud quod a nobis *apprehenditur,* nobis remanet ignotum."[42]

This accounts for Aquinas's "agnostic" statements at the purely notional level: "Manifestum est enim quod hoc nomen 'bonum,' cum sit a nobis impositum, non signat *nisi quod nos mente capimus.* Unde, cum Deus sit supra mentem nostram, super excedit hoc nomen."[43] Again and again, whenever he asked what we really know of God, Aquinas gave the same answer—firstly, "quid non est" and then, in immediate association with this, "qualiter alia se habent ad ipsum."[44] In other words, the *modus divinus* of a perfection can only be *negatively* and *relatively* situated. This would seem at first sight to be rather
[175] dubious and to bring Aquinas dangerously close to the position taken up by Maimonides or even the modernists. We should, however, not play these statements off against the fundamental affirmations of I, q. 13, a. 2 and a. 3, in which Aquinas traced some divine names back not to a negative or relative knowledge, but to an absolute, real, objective and positive knowledge of God which, however, as such, while using concepts, transcends the conceptual. "Intellectus negationis semper fundatur in aliqua affirmatione."[45] The content of the so-called transcendental perfections objectively indicates the perspective in which God is to be found—we have a sense of God positively at the end of, but nonetheless within, the *transcendentalia.* He is certainly supra-predicamental, but not "supra-transcendental." What we have here is a positive intellectual content that *directs* us *objectively* towards God's own mode of being. Our so-called "concepts of God" really define an intelligible content that is, however, *open* to the mystery. The typically noetic value of our knowledge of

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[42] *DN* Prol. (ed. Marietti 1950, 1). This dictum is not simply a neutral commentary on a text which is alien to Thomas, but the expression of the entire treatise *De Divinis Nominibus,* as condensed by Thomas in I, q. 13.

[43] *DN* c. 13, lect. 3 (ed. Marietti 1950, 369). See also *In 1 Sent.* d. 8, q. 1, a. 1, ad 4; *SCG* I, c. 5 and 14; III, c. 49; IV, c. 1; *Verit.* q. 2, a. 1, ad 9; *Potent.* q. 7, a. 5, ad 14; *BT* q. 1, a. 2, ad 1; q. 1, a. 4, ad 10; *DN* c. 1, lect. 3; c. 2, lect. 4; c. 7, lect. 4, c. fin.; c. 13, lect. 3; this also applies to the conceptual character of supernatural and even mystical knowledge of God (see, for example, II-II, q. 8, a. 7). Thomas's preference for the *via negativa* can therefore not be denied; see *SCG* I, c. 14: "est autem via remotionis utendum praecipue in consideratione divinae substantiae" and especially *DN* c. 1, lect. 3: "hoc enim est ultimum ad quod pertingere possumus circa cognitionem divinam in hac vita, quod Deus est supra id quod a nobis cogitare potest; et ideo nominatio Dei quae est per remotionem est maxime propria" (ed. Marietti 1950, 28).

[44] Or in similar terms—the "an est" and the "quod causa aliorum est" of *SCG* I, c. 30; II, c. 49.

[45] *Potent,* q. 7, a. 5.

God is therefore situated in a projective act, in which we *reach out for* God, but do not grasp him in understanding, although we are well aware that he is to be found in the precise *direction* in which we are reaching. By this we mean that our knowledge of God is not simply a blind shot in the dark. God is really to be found *within* the perspective of the intelligible content of the *transcendentalia,* which therefore really refer us positively to God. We cannot, however, positively situate him more accurately within this *definite,* noetically referential perspective. If we wish to do this, we are thrown back on what Aquinas called the negative and relative knowledge, that is, the "quid non est" and the "qualiter alia se habent ad ipsum." [176]

Summing up Aquinas's view of this problem, then, we must say that we know God positively, but that we cannot form any conceptual representation in our minds of God's own mode of being, the *modus eminentiae.* To this end, we can only appeal to *nomina negativa* and *relativa.* That is to say that our *conceptual* representation is negative and relative (because it is creaturely), but as the *expression* of a positive and affirmative content which, however, remains, by definition, unexpressed and implicit. It is, however, precisely this implicit content which allows us to use negative and relative divine names. "Unde, nisi intellectus humanus aliquid de Deo affirmative cognosceret, nihil de Deo posset negare."[46] Our proper-but-negative and our positive-but-improper knowledge of God is therefore borne up by a proper-and-positive knowledge of him which, however, remains *unexpressed,* but does form the matrix of the conceptual aspects in our knowledge of God.

The foregoing has shown that there are, according to Aquinas's doctrine, conceptual aspects in our knowledge of God, although we do not *grasp* God notionally. If we nonetheless speak of coming into contact with God in our knowledge, then we base this on the objective *perspective* that is distinctive to the contents themselves of our knowledge.[47] In this way, Aquinas avoided both agnosticism, symbolism or pragmatism and all forms of anthropomorphism. The possibility of aiming at God, in a confused but objective way, is a result of the fact that the reality in which we live is a divine creation and, as such, thus from an inner dynamism, revelatory of God. Aquinas avoided agnosticism by affirming that God is not *outside* the *transcendentalia,* and that there is "something" in creatures which is also to be found in God, but which we cannot [177] express. God is really good, in himself, but we always have a creaturely representation of goodness. For us, it is a definite goodness, the definite character of which can never entirely disappear even in a confused expression of "goodness as such." For this reason, the *modus divinus* of God's

[46] *Potent.* q. 7, a. 5; see also *SCG* I, c. 25; III, c. 2; I-II, q. 72, a. 6; *In 1 Sent.* d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, ad 2.
[47] *DN* I, lect. 2: we reach out beyond the concepts.

goodness—God himself—cannot be conceptually grasped. We therefore really *signify* the *substantia Dei* on the basis of the *objective dynamism* of the *content* of the so-called *trancendentalia,* that is, on the basis of what in reality objectively refers, beyond the limits of the finite, to God. That is why Aquinas frequently spoke of the *virtus essendi*, so as to emphasise even more strongly the objective dynamism of the *actus essendi* that is offered to us in the finite. The speculative and objective value of our knowledge of God is therefore to be found in an act of *tending towards,* with the result that we do not *properly* attribute concepts to God (we do not *attribuere Deo),* but, in the direct line of these contents, we do *tend towards* God (we do *tendere in Deum).* Because of their own content, the so-called *transcendentalia* refer noetically to the intelligibility of God, which we nonetheless do not grasp conceptually. Our knowledge of God thus possesses a speculative value—although it cannot be grasped in concepts, it is still a true, definite and meaningful knowledge. This does not mean that it can manage without concepts. Thomas expressed these two aspects—the conceptual and the non-conceptual—of our knowledge of God thus: "Huiusmodi quidem nomina significant substantiam divinam et praedicantur de Deo substantialiter, sed deficiunt a repraesentatione ipsius."[48] One result of this is also that the more
[178] precise expression of the exact content of our knowledge of God always involves a certain confusion— we know the *quid Dei* only *sub quadam confusione.*[49] It is a *quantulacumque cognitio,*[50] a noetic tending towards God, from a creaturely, excentric standpoint. It is the *intellectual* character of our knowledge of God that is manifested in this tending towards which is non-conceptual, but nonetheless linked to concepts. "Anima vero, quia extremum gradum in intellectualibus tenet, participat naturam intellectualem magis defective quasi obumbrata."[51] This noetic structure permits only of an "intellectualis quidam intuitus"[52] of God, that is, it allows us to be aware of an objective perspective in our knowledge, to know that God is present in the definite direction that is indicated by the conceptual content itself, and in no other direction.

It is clear that, whenever Aquinas mentioned "dynamism," he always had an *objective* dynamism in mind. It is certainly not without good reason that we make a distinction between the so-called transcendental perfections and the predicamental perfections, even though we see the *transcendentalia* only as finitely realised. For we make this distinction not because of the imperfection of our knowledge, but because of the content itself, which is offered objectively as

[48] I, q. 13, a. 2.
[49] *BT* q. 6. a. 3.
[50] *In 4 Sent.* d. 49, q. 2, a. 7, ad 7.
[51] *In 2 Sent.* d. 13, q. 1, a. 6 (p. 104).
[52] SCG IV, c. 1.

transcendental. This structure of our knowledge of God is even more clearly confirmed by Thomas's doctrine of the so-called analogy of God.

3. AQUINAS'S ANALOGY OF GOD AND CREATURES

It is well known that, in Aristotle, *analogia* referred exclusively to a *proportionalitas,* a term which was originally borrowed from geometrical and [179]
arithmetical relationships and then applied to qualitative relationships.[53] On the other hand, however, it is also a fact that what Thomas called formally "analogical" was never called analogical by Aristotle, that is, homonymous predication on the basis of a relationship—the so-called *ta pros ti* and the *ta aph'henos,* the *per prius et per posterius dicta.* In an analytical study, H. A. Wolfson[54] has shown that, because of the new term *amphibolos,* used by Alexander of Aphrodisias to denote the Aristotelian "homonymous prediction on the basis of a *proportio,*" the term *analogikos* eventually came, after many fluctuations in the Arabic terminology for Alexander's *amphibolos,* to mean precisely that class of expression that was never called "analogical" by Aristotle himself, that is, the *per prius et per posterius dicta.* It is also characteristic that, as the examples classified by Wolfson show, *analogon* was never used in this Arabic and Jewish philosophy in Cajetan's sense of an ontological *proportionalitas* or of an analogy between different substances, but only in the sense of an analogy *per prius et per posterius*: *ens,* as said of the *accidens,* the *substantia,* creatures and God. I do not propose, however, to go any further here into this finding, which is in itself very instructive, namely that the analogy of being was seen in Arabic metaphysics essentially as a predication *per prius et per posterius,* a predication on the basis of a relationship.

The term *analogon* is also to be found in the more neo-Platonic, Dionysian scholasticism of the twelfth and the early thirteenth centuries, used formally as a *per prius et per posterius dictum*.[55] In Alexander of Hales' fully worked out [180]
teaching on analogy and in the doctrines of William of Middleton included in Alexander's work, the term *analogia* is also encountered with the evident meaning of a "predication on the basis of a relationship between one thing and another." In other words, an analogical predication is a predication in which one name, which is, so to speak, the proper name of a definite thing, is also applied to other things, because these things bear a certain relationship to that

[53] See. G. L. Muskens, *De vocis "analogias" significatione ac usu apud Aristotelem*, Groningen 1943; "Aristoteles en het probleem der *analogia entis*," Studia Catholica 21 (1946), 72-86.
[54] "The amphibolous Terms in Aristotle, Arabic Philosophy and Maimonides," *Harvard Theological Review* 31 (1938), 151-173.
[55] See certain suggestive data in E. Schenkler, *Die Lehre von den göttlichen Namen in der Summa Alexanders von Hales. Ihre Prinzipien und ihre Methode* (Freiburger Theologische Studien XLVI), Freiburg, 1938.

one thing. The name of the one thing is therefore *transferred* to the other, and thus predicated *per posterius,* of the other as well, leaving the question undecided as to whether the *ratio nominis* is or is not inherent in the other subjects named. *Analogue* is therefore simply equivalent to *secundum prius et posterius*—"per posterius et ita analogice" or "analogice, hoc est: secundum prius et posterius."[56]

On the basis of these few historical premises, a certain vigilance in the study of Aquinas's analogy of God is certainly not out of place. Did Aquinas remain within this historical framework, or did he deviate from it in the direction taken later by Cajetan?

In my opinion, Aquinas used the word analogy in a double sense, the first meaning being the basis of the second. He borrowed *analogia* in the sense of a material relationship from Aristotle, who did not use it as a "predication" or *nominatio,* that is, as intermediate between a univocal and an equivocal saying,
[181] but rather to denote an objective relationship (in fact, a proportional relationship), forming the basis for a definite kind of homonymous predication or similarity of name. Aquinas too regarded *analogia* in the first place as an objective or ontological relationship (the nature of which will shortly become apparent). In addition, however, he also called the unity of predication, on the basis of this objective *analogia,* an *analogical predication,* thus forming the intermediate between univocity and complete equivocity. An example of this objective and real analogy can be found in I, q. 4, a. 3. This offers the real basis for an "analogical predication" in the logical and verbal or the grammatical and philosophical sense, as described in I, q. 13, a. 5. Both are, of course, closely related, as the analogical predication implies a unity of predication or similarity of name on the basis of a real analogy or *proportio.*

3. The real *analogia* of the creature to God

As far as I have been able to ascertain, there were three distinct stages in Aquinas's teaching about the ontological analogy of God. The first stage, up to 1256 (the date of the first two books of the *Scriptum*), was followed by a short intermediary period, roughly between 1256 and 1257. After a beginning had been made in the third and fourth books of the *Scriptum,* this second stage reached a temporary peak in a few questions in *De veritate* and was finally followed by the third period. It is this final stage, already initiated in the remaining questions of *De veritate,* which provides us with Thomas's definitive view.

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[56] *Summa Alexandrina,* P. II, inq. 2, tr. 1, q. 3, c. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, t. I, n. 366, p. 544); *op. cit.,* q. 1, a. 3 (I, n. 347, p. 514); Tract. introd., q. s, m. 3, c. 2 (I, n. si, p. 32); also I, n. 347, pp. 514-515; n. 366, pp. 542-544; n. 388-389, pp. 572-574; n. 295, pp. 416 and 418; t. II, n. 485, p. 673.

1. When Thomas spoke, in the first three books of his commentary on the *Sententiae,* about the real relationship of the creature to the Creator, he never referred to this relationship with the term *proportionalitas,* but always with the [182] term *proportio unius ad alterum.* The term *proportionalitas* appears to have been used in these books only to denote proportions which offer a basis for a metaphorical manner of speaking,[57] and thus also possibly for metaphors relating to God. Thomas refused, however, to take a *similitudo proportionalitatis* of this kind as the basis for our real true knowledge of God. For him, the real basis of this knowledge was the *analogia creaturae ad Creatorem,*[58] that is, the "communitas ... ex eo quod unum esse et rationem ab altero recipit ...; creatura enim non habet esse nisi secundum quod a primo ente descendit" *(loc. cit.).* The real analogy here is a *similitudo imitationis* or a *proportio unius ad alterum,* in which the *similitudo* is thus not reciprocal.[59] Thomas threw more light on this analogy by contrasting it with a second case of "analogical predication on a real basis," that is, with the case in which the subjects referred to display a reciprocal likeness. He called this relationship a "proportio *plurium* ad aliquid unum," and described it later in the *Summa* as a "convenientia in eadem forma, secundum eandem rationem sed non secundum eundem modum, sed secundum magis et minus."[60] But the analogy with reference to God was, for Aquinas, a likeness of imitation without reciprocation, a *proportio unius ad alterum.* It is true that he spoke of "una *ratio* (sapientiae) secundum analogiam,"[61] but we should not be misled by this reference to *una ratio.* There [183] are, after all, two kinds of *unitas rationis secundum analogiam:* "Quaedam secundum convenientiam in aliquo uno quod eis per prius et posterius convenit; et haec analogia non potest esse inter Deum et creaturam ...; alia analogia est, secundum quod unum imitatur aliud quantum potest nec perfecte ipsum assequitur; et haec analogia est creaturae ad Deum."[62] The first analogy (the analogy which embraces both analogates as in an "accolade") consists of the realisation of the "same *ratio*" in different subjects, but *secundum magis et minus.* According to this analogy, both mortal and venial sin, for example, were

[57] See, for example, *In 1 Sent.* d. 82, q. 1, a. 2, ad 3 (p. 536); d. 34, q. 3, a. 1, ad a (p. 798); d. 45, q. 1, a. 4 (p. 1039); *In 2 Sent.* d. 16, q. 1, a. 2, ad 5 (p. 401); see also in the third and fourth books, *In 3 Sent.* d. 2, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 1, ad 3 (pp. 56-57); *In 4 Sent.* d. 1, q. 1, sol. 5, ad 3 (p. 16). The following text, from *In 2 Sent.* d. 13, q. 1, a. 2 (p. 330), is also characteristic: "Transferuntur corporalia in spiritualibus per quandam similitudinem; quae quidem est similitudo proportionabilitatis; et hanc similitudinem oportet *reducere* in aliquam communitatem univocationis vel analogiae." The basis of the *proportionalitas* is univocity, that is, the *proportio;* see later.
[58] *In 1 Sent.* Prol., q. 1, a. 2, ad 2 (p. 10).
[59] *In 1 Sent.* d. 35, q. 1, a. 4, ad 6 (p. 821); see *op. cit.,* in c. (p. 820).
[60] I, q. 4, a. 3.
[61] *In 1 Sent.* d. 22, q. 1, a. 2, ad 3 (p. 536).
[62] *In 1 Sent.* d. 35, q. 1, a. 4, in c. (p. 820); compare this with I, q. 4, a. 3.

regarded by Aquinas as really "sins."[63] The analogy of God, on the other hand, permits of no "accolade": the unity of the *ratio nominis* in the similarity of the name is not caused by the abstract character of that particular *ratio,* as if this *ratio* were to abstract from the real differences, but by the *unity of a concrete reality.* In medieval terms, this was expressed in the following way. The unity of the *ratio nominis* is based on the unity of a concrete, ontologically realised *ratio,* to which other realities are really in proportion, with the result that, as far as naming is concerned, the name of that concrete reality, indicated in and through the *ratio nominis,* also enters into the naming of the other subjects, and does this on a basis of this material relationship. The *una ratio* therefore does not refer to an abstract *communitas,* but to the unity of the concrete reality, to an *una numero.* "Dicendum quod inter Deum et creaturam *non* est similitudo per
[184] *convenientiam in aliquo uno communi,* sed per imitationem."[64] The basis of the similarity of names here is the "absolute participation" of the creature, "secundum analogiam tantum, *prout* scilicet Deus est ens per essentiam et alia per participationem," as it was to be expressed later in the *Summa.*[65] "Creatura enim non habet esse nisi secundum quod a primo ente descendit."[66] No mention was made anywhere in these books to the *analogia proportionalitatis* in the context of the analogy of God, except in connection with the divine metaphors.

2. This was followed by a sudden change, at least in Aquinas's terminology. In *In 3 Sent.* d. 1, q. 1, a. 1, ad 3 (p. 10) and *In 4 Sent.* d. 49, q. 2, a. 1, ad 6 (ed. Parmae, p. 1200), he no longer calls the relationship between the creature and God a *proportio,* but refers to it as a *proportionalitas.* This is even more explicit in *De veritate* q. 2, a. 3, ad 4; a. 11, ad 2, ad 4 and ad 6; q. 8, a. 1, ad 6 and q. 23, a. 7, ad 9. After this, Aquinas just as suddenly ceased to use the term *proportionalitas* in connection with the analogy of God.

The commentators in the line of Cajetan, however, had recourse to these texts. According to them, we have to do with *una ratio abstracta* which possesses, by virtue of its supreme universality, "transcendental predicability": one definition is, in this view, predicable of all subjects, not in a univocal manner, but in a proportionally unified manner. The *transcendentalia* are, according to this view, *concepts* which owe their conceptual unity to the fact that, in the *ratio abstracta,* the real differences are present only in a confused manner. According to this thesis, then, we have concepts that actually include both the creaturely

[63] *In 3 Sent.* d. 42, q. 1, a. 3 (p. 1057).
[64] *In 1 Sent.* d. 35, q. 1, a. 4, ad 6 (p. 821).
[65] I, q. 4, a. 3, ad 3.
[66] *In 1 Sent.* Prol., q. 1, a. 2, ad 2 (p. 10).

and the divine reality, but in such a way that these differences are not [185]
expressed.

This solution of the later Thomistic commentators was clearly influenced by the Scotist view. According to Scotus, we do indeed know God only *ex creaturis,* but this is not the same as *in creaturis.* Conceptually, we have a positive knowledge of the being itself of God. The *transcendentalia* are true and therefore univocal concepts, which abstract from the mode of finiteness and infiniteness. We are therefore able to conceive their *ratio formalis* in itself, apart from their more precise determinations.[67] In itself, the formal *ratio* of goodness, truth, etc., pertains univocally both to God and to creatures, so that we have a positive *concept* of God as *being,* by means of which we *grasp* him conceptually. "Omnis inquisitio de Deo supponit habere conceptum eundem univocum quem accipit ex creaturis."[68] This is the point of view of essentialism consistently carried through. *Really,* God and the creature have nothing in common, and yet we have concepts that point to a *ratio formalis* that is common to both: "Deus et creatura non sunt primo diversa in *conceptibus;* tamen sunt primo diversa in *realitate,* quia in nulla realitate conveniunt."[69] The concept "being," "good," "true," etc., applied to God, differs from the same concept, applied to the creature, not by the addition of a specific *differentia,* but simply according to a *modus.* The difference is to be found in a "distinctio *realitatis* et *modi* proprii et intrinseci eiusdem,"[70] in a distinction between the concept of the same real quiddity (present in both subjects) and its more or less perfect mode. In this sense, no single concept is really a specific concept of God, since the so-called [186]
transcendental concepts make an abstraction from both the divine and the creaturely mode. But although they neither include nor exclude both these modes, we do reach, in this *ratio formalis communis,* something of God himself in a purely notional manner.[71]

The influence of Scotus on the solution of Cajetan and his followers can already be ascertained in the problem of the distinction between the divine attributes. According to Scotus, the *ratio formalis* of goodness was not the *ratio formalis* of wisdom, in view of the fact that there was always a formal

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[67] *In 1 Sent.* d. 3, q. 1, a. 4, n. 6 (Opus Oxiense, t. 1, 309-310).
[68] *Op. cit.* n. 10 (t. I, p. 31a).
[69] *In 1 Sent.* d. 8, q. 3, a. 1, n. 11 (t. I, p. 598).
[70] *In 1 Sent.* d. 8, q. 3, a. 3, n. 27 (t. I, p. 614).
[71] See C. L. Shircel, *The Univocily of the Concept of Being in the Philosophy of Duns Scotus*, Washington 1942; T. Barth, *De fundamento univocitatis apud Joh. D. Scotus*, Rome 1939; E. Gilson, "Avicenne et le point de départ de Duns Scot," *Arch. d'Hist. Doctr. Litt. du M.A.*, 2 (1927). 89-151; "L'objet de la métaphysique selon Duns Scot," Mediaeval Studies 10 (1948), 72-92; "Simplicité divine et attributs divins selon Duns Scot," *Arch. d'Hist. Doctr. Litt. du M.A.* 24 (1949) 9-43. These articles by Gilson have been collected in his *Jean Duns Scot. Introduction à ses positions fondamentales* (Etudes de philosophie médiévale, Vol. XLII), Paris 1952.

non-identity whenever the *ratio formalis* of different perfections was irreducible. As a formal *ratio,* wisdom is consequently not goodness. But wisdom and goodness are really present in God. As wisdom in God, this *ratio* is present as wisdom and not as goodness. God's real wisdom is formally not his real goodness. Since, however, both are present in God, they are consequently present as formally distinct. God's simplicity is nonetheless saved, and this is achieved by virtue of the *infinitas* of each of these *rationes formales* that are present in God. Because infiniteness is the divine mode of this particular *ratio formalis, infinitas*— which is not a divine attribute, but the divine mode of all the divine attributes—is the reason for the ontological identity of divine wisdom and divine goodness, even though the *rationes formales* remain formally and
[187] really distinct.[72] God's wisdom is his goodness, but that which is God's wisdom is not that which is his goodness.

Many Thomist commentators, influenced by these ideas, have claimed that there is a foundation in God for the assignation of divine attributes to him in a distinct manner and, for this reason, they speak of a *distinctio virtualis minor* in God himself. Thomas, however, denied in the most emphatic way that there was any foundation in God for the assignation of all these attributes to him *in a distinct manner.* He did say that there was a real foundation in God for the designation of God's being in and through the *transcendentalia* ("omnes istae multae rationes et diversae *habent aliquid correspondens* in ipso Deo, cuius omnes istae conceptiones intellectus sunt similitudines"),[73] but denied that there was any foundation *in him* for the assignation of these perfections to him in a distinct manner. It is only in creatures, as the point of departure for our knowledge of God, that a real foundation can be found for the distinction of concepts. "Diversitatis ergo vel multiplicitatis nominum causa est ex parte intellectus nostri." *(loc. cit.)* Thomas thus did not deny the reality of intellect, will, goodness and wisdom in God, but he did deny the reality or even the "virtuality" of the *distinction* in God—"non secundum rem, sed secundum rationem."[74] We must blame the limited nature of our knowledge for the fact that we cannot formally call wisdom goodness. Thomas's position in this is therefore diametrically opposed to Scotus's and the Thomist solutions inspired by Scotus: "quia cum singula nomina *determinate* aliquid significant *distinctum* ab aliis, venientia in divinam praedicationem, non significant illud finite, sed infinite; sicut nomen sapientiae *prout in rebus creatis* accipitur significat aliquid
[188] distinctum a iustitia; ... sed cum in divinis accipitur non significat aliquid determinatum ad genus et ad speciem seu distinctionem ab aliis perfectionibus,

[72] *In 1 Sent.* d. 8, q. 4, a. 3, n. 26 (t. I, p. 639), n. 17 (t. I, p. 633), n. 18 (t. I, pp. 633-634).
[73] *Potent.* q. 7, a. 6.
[74] I, q. 28, a. 2.

sed aliquid infinitum."[75] Thomas was not in any way denying here that there was a distinction between the different attributes precisely as concepts. What he was saying was that the act of predication was directed towards a *non finitum,* a reality that cannot be grasped conceptually. This means that we work, with regard to God, only with natural concepts, in which the notional representation is of its very nature creaturely (and thus includes multiplicity and distinction). It does not, however, mean that we attribute the concept as such to God, but that we know that God is, as it were, situated in the extension of this concept. The metaphysical problem was, however, basically altered in the work of Duns Scotus, who forms the link between Aquinas and later Thomism, and this has resulted in the obscuring of the distinctive character of Aquinas's teaching about the analogy of God. That is why it is important to find out the precise meaning of Aquinas's shift of attention from the *proportio* to the *proportionalitas*—a change which, by the way, was only temporary.

In *In 4 Sent.* d. 49, q. 2, a. 1, ad 6 (ed. Parmae, p. 1200), Aquinas in fact disclaimed his earlier view that a *similitudo secundum proportionem* existed between the creature and God. In considering this question, however, the context must be kept firmly in mind. By *proportio* Thomas meant, in this context, a *measurable* relationship: "proportio *determinata."* In view of the fact that the distance between God and creature cannot be measured, there could be no question of a *proportio,* although Thomas admitted that *proportio* could certainly also have a wider meaning, and could denote unmeasurable relationships as well.[76] But in its strict sense, the *proportio* included a *certitudo mensurationis,* [189] whereas the *proportio ordinis,* that is, *secundum proportionalitatem,* abstracted from the determination of the distances.[77] Because of the infinite and therefore unmeasurable distance between God and the creature, Thomas preferred to use the term *proportionalitas* in the third and fourth books of his *Scriptum.*

It was only in *De veritate* that he explicitly called the analogy of God an *analogia proportionalitatis,* and then in contrast to pure metaphors about God.[78] In q. 2, a. 11, it was formally a question of giving a common *name,* and hence of the so-called "nominal analogy." This common predication is, however, based on a really existing relationship between the creature and God, and here the term *secundum analogiam* was still identified with *secundum proportionem*—the analogy was seen as a "convenientia secundum proportionem" *(loc. cit.).* This could, however, be of two kinds. There could be a "distantia *determinata*" between the two terms, so that the relationship was reciprocal.[79] This was a

[75] *DN* I, lect. 3 (ed. Marietti, 1950, p. 31).
[76] *In 4 Sent.* d. 49, q. 2, a. 1, ad 6 (ed. Parmae, p. 1200).
[77] *In 3 Sent.* d. l, q. 1, a. 1, ad 3 (p. 10).
[78] See especially q. 2, a. 3, ad 4; a. 11, c. and ad 2, ad 4 and ad 6.
[79] See also *Verit.* q. 2, a. 3, ad 4.

proportio in the strict sense of the word. There could, however, also be a relationship which was not a *proportio (determinata),* but a *similitudo proportionum* or *proportionalitas.* In *De veritate,* Thomas classified the analogy of God in this latter category, calling it a "similis habitudo aliquorum duorum ad alia duo"[80] or a "convenientia ... duorum ad invicem inter quae non sit proportio, sed magis similitudo duarum ad invicem proportionum."[81] Here, the
[190] double analogy is therefore the *analogia proportionis* and the *analogia proportionalitatis.* The examples given for the *analogia proportionis* are the same that were given for the *analogia duorum ad aliquid unum.* A measurable relationship, incorporating a *similitudo reciproca,* is required for this analogy—something that must be denied in the case of God. This to some extent raises the conjecture that the *proportionalitas* of *De veritate* is possibly only another name for the second kind of analogy, which was previously called an *analogia unius ad alterum.* The *proportionalitas* itself is subdivided here. First there is the symbolic proportionality or metaphor, in which the *similitudo proportionalitatis* is not to be found in the *significatio principalis,* so that there can really be a transference of *meaning.* This applies to those cases in which the creaturely mode enters the *significatum* itself of the perfections referred to. Second there is the non-symbolic proportionality, which applies to those cases in which the creaturely mode does not enter the *significatum* itself. In ad 4, Aquinas provided the following classification: "similitudo. .. ex eo quod *aliqua duo* participant unum" and "similitudo ... ex eo quod *unum* habet habitudinem *determinatam* ad illud" and opposed these two to the "similitudo quae est secundum convenientiam proportionum." This third category was unknown in the first two books of the *Scriptum,* but what is equally interesting is that Thomas introduced a new shade of meaning, in *De veritate,* into the first two categories that had occurred so frequently in the first two books. What had previously been known as a "habitudo unius ad alterum" became here a "habitudo *determinata* unius ad alterum."[82] The *proportionalitas* thus became a superficially convenient term to express a "habitudo *infinita.*" Thomas had
[191] recourse to the *proportionalitas* only because of the unmeasurable, inexpressible distance between God and creature—it is clear that his use of the *analogia proportionalitatis* is a denial on his part that there is any *measure common* to both God and creatures. It is clear that the *proportionalitas* is not used in the texts of *De veritate* in the sense of one single conceptual content applying in a proportional manner both to the Creator and to creatures. Thomas's temporary repudiation of the *analogia proportionis,* then, was occasioned by his wanting

[80] *Ibid.* q. 2, a. 3, ad 4.
[81] *Ibid.* q. 2, a. 11.
[82] See also ad 6.

above all to affirm that no single creature had such a relationship with God that God's perfection could be *defined* from this relationship, because it was also in this context that he wrote: "nulla creatura habet *talem* habitudinem ad Deum per quam possit divina perfectio *determinari" (loc. cit.*, c. art.).

It is clear that Thomas preferred to give *proportio* its original, Euclidean meaning of measurable or proportional relationship in these questions of *De veritate*.[83] As far as I have been able to ascertain, he used the term *proportionalitas* in the context of the analogy of God for the first time in connection with the questions about the *Verbum incarnatum,*[84] in which the infinite distance between divine and human nature became a real difficulty in connection with the problem of the incarnation. It was precisely this difficulty which seems to have been the reason for Thomas's dropping the term *proportio,* with its implication of measurableness, in favour of the term *proportionalitas,* which, in the sphere of mathematics, wholly abstracted from the variants, and was thus able to take non-measurable relationships into account. But even then, Aquinas still remained conscious of the fact that *proportio* could also have a wider meaning, [192] since he generally added an explicit reference to this, even after giving priority to the term *proportionalitas*.[85] This constant awareness was the reason why he returned to his first formulations.

3. *De veritate* q. 23, a. 7, ad 9 is the text which shows Aquinas's transition to the stage in which the term *proportionalitas* finally disappeared from his writings. He gave two answers to the same objection that had been resolved in earlier questions of these *Quaestiones disputatae* by the *proportionalitas,* and he did this in such a way that the *proportionalitas* was moved onto the second level. "Secundum quod proportio proprie in quantitatibus invenitur, comprehendens duarum quantitatum ad invicem comparatarum *certam* mensuram," there is no *proportio* between God and the creature, whereas, "secundum quod nomen proportionis translatum est ad *quamlibet* habitudinem significandam *unius rei ad rem aliam,*" it is certainly permissible to speak of an "analogia proportionis unius ad alterum" between the creature and God, "cum in aliqua habitudine ipsum ad se habeat, utpote ab eo effectus et ei subiectus."[86] The *proportionalitas* [193]

[83] See also *In 2 Sent.* d. 24, q. 3, a. 6, ad 3; *In Post. Analyt.* I, c. 5, (ed. 12 (ed. Leon., n. 8).
[84] *In 3 Sent.* d. 1, q. 1, a. 1, ad 3.
[85] See even as early as *In 4 Sent.* d. 49, q. 2, a. 1, ad 6; cf. *Potent.* q. 7, a. 10, ad 9: "Si proportio intelligatur aliquis *determinatus* excessus, nulla est Dei ad creaturam proportio. Si autem per proportionem intelligatur habitudo sola, sic patet quod est inter Creatorem et creaturam."
[86] *Loc. cit.* This distinction between *proportio stricte dicta* and *late dicta* can be found everywhere in Thomas's work, although differently designated. See *BT* q. 1, a. 2, ad 3; cf. *In 3 Sent.* d. 1, q. l, a. 1, ad 3: "habitudo duorum convenientium in eodem genere"—"habitudo duorum convenientium in eodem ordine"; *In 2 Sent.* d. 9, q. 1, a. 3, ad 5: "proportio secondum diversas species eiusdem generis"—"proportio secundum diversum genus"; *In 2 Sent.* d. 30, q. 1, a. 1, ad 7: "proportio convenientium in eadem natura"—"proportio potentiae ad actum"; *Verit.* q. 26, a. 1, ad 7:

is, however, valid as a second answer to the difficulty. It was introduced thus: "Vel potest dici, quod finiti ad infinitum, quamvis non possit esse proportio proprie accepta, tamen potest esse proportionalitas, quae est duorum proportionum similitudo ...; et per hunc modum est similitudo inter creaturam et Deum, quia sicut se habet ad ea quae ei competunt, ita creatura ad sua propria."

When the texts in which Thomas had temporarily referred to the analogy of God as a *proportionalitas* are compared with those in which he discussed the *analogia proportionis unius ad alterum,* it becomes quite apparent that the *proportionalitas* materially covers the content of the *analogia proportionis,* that is, the "proportio creaturae ad Deum in quantum se habet ad ipsum ut effectus ad causam." [87] Thus, we have no more to learn about God from Thomas's *proportionalitas* than we had already learned from his *proportio.* This will become even clearer when the formal structure of his "nominal analogy" is examined more closely.

[194]

4. The unity of "nominal analogy"

Aquinas first studied, in the first four articles of I, q. 13, the possibility of the divine names and the way in which they were used and based these names on the knowledge of God *ex creaturis,* with the result that creaturely elements necessarily entered into our knowledge and naming of God. He then proceeded to *compare* the *nomina creaturarum* with the *nomina divina* so as to be able to define more precisely what these names had in common, in other words, their similarity of name: hence the formulation of the problem of a. 5 in the prologue to I, q. 13, "Utrum nomina aliqua dicantur de Deo et creaturis univoce vel aequivoce." The problem is therefore purely grammatical, although it has a metaphysical basis.

He sets analogical predication over against univocity and equivocity. A name is said univocally of different subjects when its conceptual content and meaning, the *ratio nominis,* is common to two or more things. What we have

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"*determinata* habitudo quantitatis ad quantitatem"—"quaelibet habitudo"; I, q. 12, a. 1, ad 4: "*certa* habitudo unius quantitatis ad alterum"—"quaelibet habitudo unius ad alterum"; *SCG* III, c. 54: "commensuratio proportione existente"—"quaecumque habitudo unius ad alterum"; *Potent,* q. 7, a. 10, ad 9; cf. *Quodl.* 10, q. 8, a. 1, ad 1: "determinatus excessus"—"habitudo sola" or "quaelibet habitudo"; *Verit.* q. 8, a. 1, ad 6: "habitudo quantitatis ad quantitatem"—"habitudo cuiuslibet ad rem alteram." A. Hayen has already drawn attention to this in his *L'intentionnel dans la philosophie de saint Thomas* (Museum Lessianum, sect. Phil., n. 25), Brussels and Paris 1945, 89-90.

[87] 1, q. 12, a. 1, ad 4. I am not making a critical study here of the idea of the *proportionalitas* in itself, but have merely aimed at providing an outline of Thomas's attitude towards the *proportionalitas.* The question as to whether the *proportionalitas* in itself can in fact have a metaphysical meaning is, however, quite different. For this question, see, for example, the controversy between E. L. Mascall, *Existence and Analogy,* London, New York and Toronto 1949, especially 108-109, and A. M. Farrer, *Finite and Infinite,* Westminster 1943, especially 52ff.

here is an identical word-meaning, the *ratio* of which can be *predicated* equally of these subjects precisely because it is abstract and is not concerned with individual, concrete differences. The fact that it is univocally applicable to many things is therefore based on the abstract quality of its conceptual content. That is why the similarity of name between Creator and creature—"God is good," "the creature is good"—cannot be explained by the universality of the concept. Aquinas had, in any case, already pointed out in the preceding articles that we do not have such a single *ratio abstracta* embracing both God and the creature. We have no appropriate *ratio* of God, no *concept* of God—in our knowledge of God, we work with *rationes* or *definitiones* of creaturely perfections. And, even though we do find, in the creature, a "too much" that [195]
transcends the creaturely limits and objectively points to God, we cannot to such an extent disregard the creaturely mode in the concept, which is indissolubly connected with the creature, as to be left eventually with a real "concept of God." The similarity of name between God and the creature is therefore not based on the unity of the conceptual representation, as this can only be attributed to the creature and not to God. The identical name "goodness" thus does not cover an identical *ratio,* but, on the one hand, a *ratio* that is measured by the creaturely perfection and, on the other hand, a "*ratio*" *Dei* which is non-conceivable and which escapes us, but to which the creaturely content, by an inward dynamism, objectively refers.

On the other hand, however, there can be no question of equivocity. The similarity of name is equivocal when the same name pertains to different subjects in such a way that the content of meaning is quite different. This is a purely grammatical, linguistic phenomenon.

Thomas therefore concluded by calling the similarity of name between God and creature a similarity "secundum analogiam, idest proportionem." Nominal analogy always involves a *transference of name* from one subject to other subjects, just because these bear some relationship to this one subject and are for this reason called by the name of this first subject.[88]

It is a striking fact that Aquinas based the analogy of names on the reality, and not on the *ratio concepta* itself. A text from *Contra Gentiles* II, c. 16 seems to me to be fundamental to this question: "Quorumcumque *in rerum natura* est aliqua proportio et aliquis ordo, oportet *unum eorum esse ab alio* vel *ambo ab aliquo* [196]
uno."[89] It is precisely these two cases which form the *basis* for a twofold analogical predication, that is, the use of one name for two different things, and this on the basis of an *analogia.* Aquinas therefore always distinguished two

[88] P. Kreling has already referred to this meaning of "analogy" in Aquinas. See "De betekenis van de analogie in de kennis van God," *Verslag Ver. van Thomistische Wijsbegeerte,* Nijmegen 1942, 31-54.
[89] See also in *similitudo* terms, *Verit.* q. 2, a. 14; I, q. 65, a. 1, etc.

types of analogical predication, according as to whether its basis was either a *proportio* (or *analogia*) *unius ad alterum* or a *proportio duorum* (*vel plurium*) *ad aliquid unum.*[90] This was expressed by Aquinas in various ways:

—*analogia proportionis duorum* (*vel plurium*) *ad unum:* "aliqua participant unum,"[91] "plura in uno" or "multa in unum,"[92] "duorum ad tertium,"[93] "plurium ad unum, scilicet finem, efficiens vel subiectum."[94]

—*analogia proportionis unius ad alterum:* "unum ab altero,"[95] "unum ad alterum,"[96] "unum imitatur aliud."[97]

A difficulty is presented by several texts in which there is an apparent reference to a third type: "duo ad diversa"[98] or "plurium ad plura subiecta."[99] Is this, then, an *analogia plurium ad plura* or a *proportionalitas?* The examples mentioned are undoubtedly those of a proportionality. In *In 4 Metaphys., loc. cit.*, this analogy is contrasted with the *analogia plurium ad unum,* and the example
[197] mentioned points to a metaphorical proportionality. In the second text quoted, this is less clear. But we may safely conclude that the *analogia plurium ad plura* is only a form of the *analogia unius ad alterum,* and that for Thomas, in the few texts in which, under the influence of Aristotle, he refers to *proportionalitas,* this is based on the *proportio* and not *vice versa,* that is, the *proportio* being based on the *proportionalitas.*

From the point of view of textual criticism, then, we have to adhere to the two types—*unius ad alterum* and *duorum (plurium) ad unum.* Basically, both these types go back to the *same* analogy-structure, *proportio ad unum aliquid* or, as Thomas himself formulated it, "analoga *quia* proportionantur ad unum,"[100] "dicuntur secundum analogiam, *id est* secundum proportionem ad unum."[101] Now this real *unum aliquid* may pertain to the so-called *analogata* themselves, in which case it is a question of a *proportio unius ad alterum,* or it may not pertain to these, in which case it is a question of an *analogia duorum (plurium) ad aliquid unum (tertium).* The last type is based on the first, which is the fundamental

[90] See, for example, *In 1 Sent.* Prol., q. 1, a. 2, ad 2; *In 1 Sent.* d. 35, q. 1, a. 4; *De princ. nat.* (ed. Text. Phil. Frib. 2, Fribourg and Louvain 1950, 102-104); *Verit.* q. 2, a. 11, ad 6; *BT* q. 1, a. 2. ad 3; *SCG* I. c. 34; *Potent.* q. 7, a. 7; *In 4 Metaphys.* lect. 1; *In 5 Metaphys.* lect 8; *In 7 Metaphys.* lect. 4; *In 1 Ethic,* lect. 7; I, q. 13, a. 5; *Compend. Theol.* c. 27, etc.
[91] *In 1 Sent.* Prol., *loc. cit.*
[92] *In 1 Sent.* d. 35, *loc. cit.; SCG* I, c. 34; *In* 5 *Metaphys.* lect. 8; I, q. 13, a. 5; *Verit.* q. 2, a. 11, ad 6.
[93] *Potent.* q. 7, a. 7.
[94] *In 4 Metaphys.* lect. 1; *In 1 Ethic.* lect. 7; *De princ. nat., loc. cit.*
[95] *In 1 Sent.* Prol., *loc. cit.*
[96] *Verit.* q. 2, a. 11, ad 6; *SCG* I, c. 34; *Potent,* q. 7, a. 7; I, q. 13, a. 5.
[97] *In 1 Sent.* d. 35, *loc. cit., c.* and ad 6; *In 1 Sent.* Prol., *loc. cit.*
[98] *In 5 Metaphys.* lect. 8.
[99] *In 1 Ethic.* lect. 7.
[100] *In 11 Metaphys.* lect. 3.
[101] *Compend. Theol.* c. 27.

type. This emerges clearly from the repeated example of both analogies—*ens* is said analogically as the name of *qualitas* and *quantitas. Qualitas* and *quantitas* here are the *analogata,* whereas the concrete *substantia* is the point of reference or the *analogans*—*ens* is the proper name only of the substance. This is the *analogia duorum ad unum* term, but because one of the things called *ens* is the proper *ens* and communicates its name to the other. The primary term is therefore rather the *analogans* and, properly speaking, not an *analogatum.* It is clear from this that the *analogia unius ad alterum* is the basis of the *analogia duorum ad tertium*—because separately *qualitas* and *quantitas* have a *proportio* to the [198] substance (thus, because of the *unum ad alterum),* both bear a mutual relationship towards each other, but *per respectum ad substantiam.* In the *analogia duorum ad tertium,* the mutual *similitudo* of the *analogata* is therefore reciprocal, while this does not, in itself, need to be so in the case of the *analogia unius ad alterum.*

It is important to note that the *unum aliquid* with which we are always concerned here is not a *ratio abstracta communis.* The *unum* to which something (or more things) is directed is referred to as a "causa efficiens,"[102] a "causa finalis,"[103] a "causa exemplaris,"[104] or a "subiectum."[105] What we have here is not a conceptual unity, a *ratio communis abstracta,* but an "unum numero."[106] The things are in a definite relationship to a real something which, *because of this relationship,* communicates its name to the subjects concerned. As a result, analogy always includes a *secundum prius et posterius. Analogice* and *secundum prius et posterius* are identical—"analogice, *idest* secundum prius et posterius."[107] The *name* that is attributed *secundum prius* to the central reality is also ascribed to or used for the realities that are dependent on the central reality. That, then, [199] is the basis of analogical predication. It is therefore quite outside the *ratio formalis* of analogy, whether the *ratio nominis,* that is, the conceptual content (of the central reality), is or is not really to be found in the realities referred to. It is true that this is of great importance for the noetic structure of our knowledge of God, but it is not important for the problem of analogical predication, with the result that both the metaphors of God and the divine attributes proper show, in

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[102] *In 1 Sent.* Prol., *loc cit.*; *De princ. nat., loc. cit.*; *In 4 Metaphys., loc. cit.*; *In 1 Ethic, loc. cit.*
[103] *De princ. nat., loc. cit.*; *In 4 Metaphys., loc. cit.*; *In 1 Ethic, loc. cit.*
[104] *In 1 Sent.* d. 35, *loc cit.*
[105] *In 1 Sent.* d. 35, *loc cit.*; *De princ. nat., loc. cit.*; *In 4 Metaphys., loc. cit.*; *In 1 Ethic, loc. cit.*
[106] *In 4 Metaphys.* lect. 1 (ed. Marietti 1950, n. 536).
[107] I, q. 5, a. 6, ad 3; *De malo,* q. 7, a. 1, ad 1; I—II, q. 61, a. 1, ad 1: I—II, q. 88, a. 8, ad 1; II—II, q. 120, a. 2, etc. The difficulty presented by *Verit.* q. 2, a. 11, ob. 6 and ad 6 can be resolved from the definite standpoint that Thomas provisionally took up there; anyway, we can regard something in itself and thus "define" it, but in this case the definition is incomplete. But if we define it as geared to the whole and as dependent on God, then God really enters the definition of every finite being. See the interpretation of this text in Francis Sylvester, *In Contra Gentiles,* I, c. 34.

their function as "analogical predicates," the same structure *proper to analogy.* Whether or not the *una forma* that is encountered in the real so-called primary *analogon* is inherent to the other subjects is a question that is outside the *ratio formalis analogiae.* For this reason, Thomas gives examples of the analogy as a *proportio ad unum,* in which the *forma* of the *analogans was* inherent in the so-called *analogata,*[108] as well as examples of purely extrinsic attribution.[109] Analogy is therefore essentially an *attributio,* no matter whether the *una forma* is or is not inherent in the different subjects. Thomas thus always spoke of "*attribuere* nomen unius alteri," even if the said perfection was realised, deficiently perhaps but inwardly, in the *subjectum attributionis.*[110] Analogical predications of God therefore mean, in *linea analogiae,* simply that we transfer the *name* of the one to the other because of the real relationship of the creatures to God. Thomas did not say that the *ratio concepta* is attributed to God. What he did say is that the *name* is attributed to him and that we *tend towards* and designate God via the *ratio* that is directly covered by the name (the *ratio*
[200] *nominis).* This, then, is what Thomas meant by analogical knowledge of God. "Ex eo enim quod alias res comparamus ad Deum sicut ad suam primam originem, huiusmodi *nomina,* quae significant perfectiones aliarum rerum, Deo *attribuimus.*"[111] The *attributio* refers formally to the transference of the *name.* There is no reference at all here to an "analogical *concept*" predicated in a proportionally unified manner of different subjects. The *universale proportionale* has no place in Thomas's view. For him the analogy was not to be found in concepts. For analogical predication or naming in connection with God was used by Thomas precisely in order to be able, to some extent, to express a certain real identity that cannot be conceptually grasped either specifically or even generically.

The content of the analogical predication is, in superficial cases of analogy, a definite conceptual content which is, as such, said univocally of a definite reality (the so-called central reality—for example, *sanum* as a term with the conceptual content *sanitas animalis).* The other realities which, taken in the concrete, have a relationship to this *sanitas animalis* each have their own *definitio.* As such, however, they are not formally regarded as analogical. They are only regarded as analogical when their relationship to the *sanitas animalis* is kept in mind. In that case, they are, analogously, themselves called "healthy," that is to say, the one concrete health of the biological being enters in its concrete definite quality into the definition of the other subjects that are, in one way or another,

[108] See, for example, *In 4 Metaphys.* lect. 1 (n. 535); *substantia* and *accidens* are both really *ens,* although the *accidens* is *ens* only in relation to the substance.
[109] See, for example, I, q. 13, a. 5: *sanum* is said of *animal* and of *medicina.*
[110] See, for example, *Potent.* q. 3, a. 5, *Compend theol.* c. 27.
[111] *Compend. Theol.* c. 27.

related to it. There is, therefore, no question here of *one abstract concept* that in a confused but actual manner includes the differences of the subject. "*Alia* et *alia* est significatio nominis, sed *una illarum significationum* clauditur *in significationibus aliis.* Unde manifestum est quod analogice dicuntur" [112] — [201]
"*eadem* est enim sanitas quam animal suscipit, urina significat, medicina facit et diaeta conservat."[113] The *prius*-reality, the name of which we transfer to the other subjects, thus enters into the definition itself of the other subjects.[114]

In his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics,* Thomas does, it is true, have a text that has been turned by many scholars to account in favour of the *universale proportionale*—"Aliquid praedicatur de diversis …, quandoque secundum *rationes* quae *partim sunt diversae* et *partim non diversae.*"[115] This should, however, be understood in its context—the diversity is there "secundum quod important diversae habitudines ad aliquid unum," the unity, on the other hand, "secundum quod istae diversae habitudines referentur ad *unum* aliquid." This *unum* is an "unum numero,"[116] and thus a concrete reality—one *ratio, univocally* applicable to one concrete reality. The diverse *analogata,* and therefore their "diversae rationes," on the other hand, express a relationship to this "una ratio" of the concrete *analogans.* Thus, "ratione diversa referuntur ad unum, sicut est in analogicis."[117] This is Aquinas's usual thesis—the *proportio ad unum* is the basis for a transferenece of name *secundum prius et posterius.*

This *prius et posterius* includes the entire network that exists in a more or less intimate manner between things or that we ourselves introduce, because of bases in reality, between things themselves. It is in this light that we should [202]
interpret the threefold division of analogy given by Thomas in *In 1 Sent.* d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1, where he refers to an analogy "secundum intentionem tantum," "secundum esse et secundum intentionem" and finally "secundum esse et non secundum intentionem." This passage is not concerned with a division of the analogical predication, but with the nature of the real or non-real *proportio* between things, on which the analogical predication is based.[118]

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[112] I, q. 13, a. 10.
[113] *In 4 Metaphys.* Lect. 1 (n. 537).
[114] See, for example, I, q. 16, a. 6; 1—II, q. 20, a. 3, ad 3; III, q. 60, a. 1, ad 3; I, q. 13, a. 6; *SCG* II, 15; cf. I, q. 76, a. 4, arg. 3; II-II, q. 26, a. 1; SCG I, c. 32, etc.
[115] *In 4 Metaphys.* lect. 1 (n. 535) and *In 11 Metaphys.* lect. 3 (n. 2197): "ratio partim diversa partim una."
[116] *In 4 Metaphys.* lect. 1 (n. 536).
[117] *Ibid.* (n. 568).
[118] Aquinas's division of analogy referred to above is perfectly reconcilable with the following division of the basis of analogy:
A. *Analogia duorum (vel plurium) ad unum tertium*
a. "Secundum intentionem tantum"; example: *sanum* is said analogically of *medicina* and *urina* with regard to *sanitas animalis* (see, for example, I, q. 13, a. 5; I, q. 16, a. 6; I—II, q. 20, a. 3, ad 3; *In 4*

[203] If we now apply this formal structure of analogy to our so-called names of God, we shall come to the following insights. In view of the fact that the *secundum prius et posterius* is essential to every analogical predication, Thomas, after having established the analogical character of our names of God (I, q. 13, a. 5), as a matter of course asked the question: "supposito quod dicantur analogice, utrum dicantur de Deo prius vel de creaturis."[119]

"In analogicis oportet quod nomen secundum unam significationem acceptam ponatur in definitione eiusdem nominis secundum alias significationes accepti."[120] This is important if we are, by way of the theory of analogy, to find confirmation for Thomas's idea concerning the non-conceptual intellectual dimension in our knowledge of God.

This is a simple matter in the case of the so-called metaphorical names of God, where it is clear that the creature is the *prius* or the central reality from which the creaturely names are predicated analogically of God. The proper names of God, however, pose a more difficult problem. It was clear from I, q. 13, a. 1 to a. 4 that what is indicated by such names is essentially present in God—God is good. But, in this context, Thomas at once makes the distinction
[204] that was traditional at the time between the *res significata* and the *impositio*

Metaphys. lect. 1, n. 535; *In 5 Metaphys.* lect. 8, n. 879; *SCG* I, c. 34). This analogical transference of name is therefore founded on relationships that we ourselves situate in reality, on a basis of a real foundation. *Sanum* as such is, however, an *univocum.*

b. "Secundum intentionem et esse"; example: *ens* is said of *qualitas* and *quantitas* with regard to *substantia* (see, for example, *Potent.* q. 7, a. 7; *Verit.* q. 2, a. 11, ad 6). Here, the *content* of what is said is real *(secundum esse)* in both *analogata,* but it is real in that it is dependent on the being of the substance, which is the proper *unum.* It is also characteristic of Thomas that he never calls the *analogy of being* a *proportionalitas.* The examples of the so-called analogy of being are in his case always substance as opposed to the accidents or the creatures as opposed to God. "Omnia alia praedicamenta habent rationem entis a substantia; ideo modus entitatis substantiae, scilicet esse quid, participatur secundum similitudinem *proportionis* in omnibus aliis praedicamentis" *(In 7 Metaphys.* lect. 7, n. 1334). The *substantia* itself is a participation of God: "hoc ipso quod creatura habet substantiam modificatam et finitam, demonstrat quod sit a primo principio" (I, q. 9, a. 6). The analogy of being in the Cajetanian sense would appear to be unknown to Aquinas. It is, however, outside the scope of this chapter to examine in greater detail the problem of the Thomist *ens commune* with regard to God as the *principium entis.*

B. *Analogia unius ad alterum*

a. "Secundum intentionem tantum": *sanum* said of *animal* and of *medicina* (I, q. 13, a. 5; *Verit.* q. 2, a. 11; q. 21, a. 4, ad 2).

b. "Secundum intentionem et esse": *ens* said of *substantia* and *accidens;* wisdom said of God and of man *(Potent,* q. 7, a. 7; *SCG* I*, c.* 34; *De malo* q. 7, a. 1, etc.).

The "secundum esse et non secundum intentionem" refers in Thomas's work to the so-called perfections which are univocal for the logician and analogical for the metaphysician— corporeality is said univocally of the sublunar bodies and the celestial bodies, but the *esse* of corporeality—that is, their concrete state of being physical—is completely different in the *corpora corruptibilia* and the medieval *corpora incorruptibilia caelestia (In 1 Sent.* d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1; see *Potent.* q. 7, a. 7, ad I in contrar.). "Corporeality" does become a *ratio communis* if we take a purely abstract standpoint.

[119] The title of I, q. 13, a. 6, according to the prologue to q. 13.

[120] I, q. 13, a. 10.

nominis, to which, as I have said, the *ratio nominis* has still to be added. Ontologically, the names that point to transcendental perfections are attributed, *per prius,* to God—God is, simply and of his very nature, good, while the creature is only good as participating in God's goodness. The creature is God's goodness itself, *as participated.* God, as ontologically *prius,* thus enters into the very definition of the creature. Nonetheless, we *know* God only via his manifestation in the creature, with the result that it is in and through our knowledge of the goodness of the creature that we reach and name the goodness of God. In this way, the creature is the central reality of all our analogical names of God. And since our idea of God's goodness remains, as we have seen, a creaturely idea, we are bound to say that, in our knowledge and naming of God, the creaturely idea of goodness enters into the defining naming of God's goodness. In other words, for our knowledge of God, the creaturely concept always remains the *prius* from which we can objectively only aim at and mean the ontological *prius,* without however ever conceptually grasping and understanding God. Analogy is a manner of *predication* and it moves therefore on the level of the *impositio nominis.* That is why, for our *explicit* knowledge, the creaturely reality is always the *prius* to which we have to refer in order to know anything about God. If we mean the implicit content, then the name "goodness" applies primarily to God. If, however, we mean the explicit conceptual contents, then these apply primarily to the creature, but it should be understood that—because of the implicit, real content—an objective view is opened onto what God really is. "Respondeo et dico quod nomen alicuius rei nominatae a nobis dupliciter potest accipi: quia vel est expressivum aut significativum conceptus intellectus, ... et sic nomen prius est in creaturis quam in Deo. Aut inquantum est manifestativum quidditatis rei nominatae exterius, [205] et sic est prius in Deo."[121] As far as the *conceptual* element in our knowledge of God is concerned, we work inevitably and always with creaturely concepts—we have no concept of God. That our knowledge of God is capable of grasping reality cannot be derived from the conceptual element in itself and *as such.* Thomas never regarded God and the creature (in his non-essentialist statements) as *inferiora* of a general concept *ens commune.* The being of the creatures themselves is a *participatio esse divini:* "unumquodque participat esse *secundum habitudinem* quam habet ad primum essendi principium."[122] For Thomas, the analogy of being was a *proportio immediata unius* (that is, of the creature) *ad alterum* (that is, to God) with, as an inward consequence, the real

[121] *In Ep. ad Ephes.* c. 3, lect. 4 (ed. Marietti 1953, 43, n. 169).
[122] *In lib. de causis* c. 25 (ed. Text. Phil. Frib. 4/5, Fribourg 1945, 126); see *De substantiis separatis* c. 8; *In 2 Metaphys.* lect. 2, n. 290-296; *SCG* II, c. 15; *Potent,* q. 7, a. 7, ad 2: *Quodl.* 12, q. 5, a. 1; *In 1 Sent.* d. 43, q. 1, a. 2, ad 4.

ordering of the being of the created beings to the *esse subsistens.* "Creatura enim non habet esse nisi secundum quod a primo ente descendit (objective, real *analogia* or participation) nec *nominatur* ens nisi in quantum ens primum imitatur (nominal analogy because of the objective *proportio.)"*[123] It is clear from *Contra Gentiles* I, c. 33, that Aquinas speaks only of a "communitas nominis" ("non *rationis")* and that he does so because of a relationship of participation: "Consideratur enim in huiusmodi nominum communitate, ordo causae et causati." If we continue to use the term "analogy," we must say that all our affirmations concerning God are analogical, because we know God only *from the creature*—because, in other words, the creature *shows* God to us in the direct
[206] extension of (but also within) the *transcendentalia.* The basis of the reality of our knowledge of God is therefore neither a so-called proportionally one, proper *concept,* nor the subjective dynamism of the spirit, which makes the concept into a projection of God, but rather the *objective* dynamism of the content of being (that is, the so-called *transcendentalia)* to which man's spirit fully consents in an act of intellectual tending or projection. This seems to me to express most precisely Thomas's most intimate thought concerning our knowledge of God. I call it Thomas's most intimate thought, since texts can be found in Thomas's writing, even in his later works, in which, under the influence of Avicenna, unmistakably essentialist echoes are discernible. It is, however, at the same time necessary to point out that Thomas did not analyse any further the structure of the knowledge of this distinction between the transcendental perfections and the predicamental conceptual contents. He merely affirmed what is meaningful in this distinction and denied that we have any authentic concepts of God, that is, that we may *grasp* God purely in notions. The consequences of this loyal affirmation of the transcendental character of the content of being for the noetic structure itself of the objective act of knowing were not subjected by Thomas to further analysis. His entire synthesis, however, shows clearly that he seriously meant what he was saying when he wrote "in intellectu humano puritas intellectualis cognitionis non penitus obscuratur."[124] In other words, human knowledge is borne up by the veiled, non-conceptual dimension of knowing.

[123] *In 1 Sent.* Prol., q. 1, a. 2, ad 2.
[124] *Verit.* q. 13, a. 3. As is shown by the context, *intellectualis* is contrasted with *rationalis.*

Chapter 13

THE NON-CONCEPTUAL INTELLECTUAL ELEMENT IN THE ACT OF FAITH: A REACTION

Since the appearance, from 1910 onwards, of P. Rousselot's articles about the act of faith[1] and his book, *L'intellectualisme de saint Thomas*,[2] there has been a steady flow of books and articles about the "light of faith" and about the *instinctus fidei* or the "divine impulse which prompts and invites us to believe."[3] The experiential aspect of the act of faith, which had disappeared in post-Tridentine speculation about the act of faith, has once again been accorded [031]

[1] "Les yeux de la foi," *RSR 1* (1910), 241-259, 444-475; "Remarques sur l'histoire de la notion de foi naturelle," *RSR* 4 (1913), 1-36.

[2] Paris 1926[2]. Eng. trans., *The Intellectualism of St. Thomas,* London and New York, 1935.

[3] From the copious literature on this subject, I would mention the following books and articles: E. Dhanis, "Le problème de l'acte de foi," *NRT* 68 (1946), 26-43; "Révélation explicite," *Greg.* 34 (1953), 187-237; J. H. Walgrave, *Geloofwaardigheid en Apologetica* (Theologica. Voordrachten Vlaams Werkgenootschap voor Theologie), Ghent 1953, 16-24; J. de Wolf, *La justification de la foi chez saint Thomas et le père Rousselot,* Brussels and Paris, 1946; M. D. Chenu, *La psychologie de la foi dans la théologie du XIIIe siècle,* Paris and Ottawa, 1932; *Contribution a l'histoire du traité de la foi* (Mélanges thomistes), Kain 1923, 123-141; R. Aubert, *Le problème de l'acte de foi,* Louvain 1958[3]; F. Jansen, "La psychologie de la foi dans la théologie du XIIIe siècle," *NRT* 61 (1934), 604-615; L. Cornelissen, *Geloof zonder prediking,* Roermond 1946; I. Trethowan, *Certainty, Philosophical and Theological,* Westminster 1948; *The Basis of Belief,* London and New York, 1961; A. Stolz, *Glaubensgnade und Glaubenslicht nach Thomas von Aquin* (Stud. Anselmiana, n. 1), Rome 1933; B. Douroux, "La structure psychologique de l'acte de foi chez saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Freib. Zeitschr. für Phil. und Theol.* 1 (1954), 281-301; "Aspects psychologiques de l'analysis fidei chez saint Thomas d'Aquin, *ibid.* 2 (1955), 148-172, 296-315; "L'illumination de la foi chez saint Thomas d'Aquin," *ibid. 3* (1956), 29-38; M. Labourdette, "L'affection dans la foi théologale," *RT* 43 (1937). 101-115.

For the historical background to all these studies, see G. Engelhardt, *Die Entwicklung der dogmatischen Glaubenspsychologie in der mittelalterlichen Scholastik vom Abälardstreit bis zu Philipp dem Kanzler,* Munster 1933; for later scholasticism, see F. Schlagenhaufen, "Die Glaubensgewiszheit und ihre Begrundung in der Neuscholastik," *ZKT* 56 (1932), 311-379, 530-595.

For the connection between Thomas's "light of faith" and the mystical theology of John of the Cross, see Joh. a Cruce Peters, *Geloof en mystiek,* Louvain, 1957.

its proper place by these writers. Neglect of the "mystical aspect of faith" in the Fathers and the scholastic authors of the high Middle Ages had led to the act of faith being regarded more or less as a conclusion drawn from successful reasoning. A. Gardeil and R. Garrigou-Lagrange were the first to react against this impoverished theology of faith—partly as a result of the Modernist crisis in the Church—but even stronger reactions were evoked by historical studies of the light of faith in Thomas, Albert[4] and Bonaventure,[5] by the new movements in philosophy and by contemporary interest in human existential experience.[6]

In my opinion, pride of place must be given, in all these studies, to a
[032] recently published work by Max Seckler, *Instinkt und Glaubenswille nach Thomas von Aquin,*[7] the substance of which was originally written as a thesis and submitted by the author to the faculty of Catholic theology at Tübingen. I can best characterize this book as a genetic study, almost on the lines of form criticism, of the non-conceptual aspect of the act of faith in the works of Aquinas. And let me say at once that Seckler's study surpasses everything that we have hitherto been offered in the way of historical and theological analysis of the grace of faith as the basis of the entire life of faith according to Aquinas. It seems to be that a detailed analysis of this book, providing a basis for critical reflection, would, for various reasons, be very valuable. In the first place, there are in these work very important elements which must be given their rightful place in the development of modern systematic thought about the life of faith. Secondly, this book is important in that it brings us, by way of a historical confrontation with Aquinas's vision of faith, into contact with a world of thought in which a certain contemporary sensibility in connection with the secularisation of society is manifestly expressed.

1. AQUINAS'S VISION OF FAITH ACCORDING TO SECKLER

In the first part of the book (pp. 19-68), the author outlines the history of the word *instinctus.* He discusses the various differences in meaning of this word and its use in Roman and Greek literature (*instinctus* was used to translate the Greek words *enthousiasmos* and *hormē,* which clearly already had a numinous meaning), in patristic literature and in the scholasticism of the early and high
[033] Middle Ages. The whole field in which *instinctus* in its unity of meaning was

[4] For the study of Albert the Great's vision of faith, see the compelling article by A. Maccaferri, "Le dynamisme de la foi selon Albert le Grand," *RSPT* 29 (1940), 278-303.
[5] For Bonaventure's vision of faith, see the rewarding book by R. Rosenmöller, *Religiöse Erkenntnis nach Bonaventura* (Beiträge, pt. XXV-3 and 4), Münster 1925, especially 94-123.
[6] The representatives of that movement are, of course, universally known: J. Mourroux, G. Marcel, R. Guardini, A. Brunner, etc.
[7] Mainz 1962.

applied in the works of Aquinas is studied against this background. He would appear to have used the word in a wide variety of applications: (a) the natural instinct, the instinct of the will, the intellect or the conscience; (b) the instinct of God or an "inward, divine instinct," an instinct of grace; (c) the instinct of the celestial bodies, of the *daimōn* and of the devil; and finally (d) the "inward, higher and special instinct," a divine instinct in many different sectors of the life of grace—the instinct of faith, the instinct in the gifts of the Holy Spirit and so on. Aquinas was aware of an *instinctus* at all levels of life. The word *instinctus* (which means something quite different from what is meant by our modern word "instinct," although all affinity cannot be excluded) sometimes had a psychological significance in Aquinas and sometimes a purely ontological, non-psychological significance. Yet, throughout the entire wide field in which Aquinas used the word, *instinctus* nonetheless has a clear unity of meaning—"instinct" is an active impulse (*sufficiens inductivum*) *de facto* suited to bring about activity in a certain sector of life. This introductory semantic study is followed by an analysis, in the three long sections of the second part of Seckler's work (pp. 69-258), of the "instinct of faith" or the grace which invites us to believe.

1. The beginning of faith according to Aquinas's earliest works

In the first place, the problem is situated within the context in which Aquinas discussed it—justification by faith, and thus in the wider context of a theology of conversion (*conversio,* with its remote and immediate preparation) and consequently in the broad Thomist framework of the doctrine of *exitus* and *reditus;* that is, the creative act by means of which all creatures are flowing out from God is at the same time the principle of their return to God. Within this [034] context, the problem of the *initium fidei,* the beginning of faith, is posed—how is this return brought about in man? In this part of the book, Seckler adds nothing that is substantially new to what H. Bouillard had already put forward in his book, *Conversion et grace chez saint Thomas,*[8] but unlike Bouillard, Seckler concentrates his attention on the beginning of faith. Thinking along the same lines as Bouillard, but more acutely and consistently, he makes the discovery that changes of emphasis took place between Aquinas's earlier works and his later writings. According to Seckler, Aquinas held the following view in his earlier works: although it is ultimately God who moves our will to believe, the will to believe nevertheless does not come about by virtue of many different impulses or a divine instinct, but *through the medium of man's appreciation of a value.* What moves man to consent in faith is, according to Seckler's view of the

[8] Paris, 1944.

younger Aquinas, not the personal God, but the idea of a value, the prospect of a value to which the will aspires. And this idea of a value is based on a taking cognisance of the Message of the gospels—faith comes "from what is heard."[9] According to Seckler's interpretation, therefore, this is not directly a question of experiencing a value in an inward attraction of grace on hearing the Good News. The Message, presented outwardly, speaks to man and addresses an invitation to him. But this invitation only becomes a *ratio credendi,* a motive of belief, by way of rational argument, as it is only after "argumentative thought" that it is possible and permissible to give consent in faith, in view of the fact that it is the verification of the valuable aspect of what is offered which in fact *makes*
[035] it a motive of belief. In this way, scope is also provided for the voluntary character of faith, since, assuming that the Good News is heard, it is always up to an initiative of man's free will to respond or not to respond to the Word that is heard and to accomplish the act of faith. According to Seckler, there is in Aquinas's earliest works no question of an "actual grace" in the making of the act of faith. The universal dynamism of human life is sufficient, on hearing the Message of the gospels, for the acceptance of this Message as a value in life or for its refusal as a non-value by a personal decision.

In this argument, Seckler is at one with Bouillard, who had already made the discovery that the Aquinas of the *Scriptum* and of the *De veritate* was (like his contemporaries) unfamiliar with the Church's documents condemning Semi-Pelagianism, that is, the texts of the Second Council of Orange.

2. The new doctrine of "instinct" and its three sources

In a masterly analysis, on the lines of form criticism, Seckler next comes to an understanding of how Aquinas incorporated his doctrine about the *instinctus fidei* into his earlier arguments about the *lumen fidei* (the commentary on the Sentences, *De veritate)* and of how his theology of the act of faith—thanks to his idea of "instinct"—thereby acquired a completely different emphasis.

a. The discovery of Semi-Pelagianism: instinct as grace

Seckler proceeds from Bouillard's correct finding that, during his first period in Italy (1259-1260), Aquinas, either indirectly or directly, came across the documents of the ecclesiastical condemnation of Semi-Pelagianism. From a
[036] certain point onwards (in the middle of the period in which he was writing his third book *Contra Gentiles),* three ideas which are not found in Aquinas's earlier works suddenly made an appearance in his writing: greater stress was placed on God's initiative; an *auxilium divinum* was seen to be directly active in the

[9] *In 3 Sent.* d. 23, q. 3, a. 4, ad 4; ad 2; d. 25, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 2, ad 3; a. 1, sol. 5, ad 1; d. 24; q. 1, a. 3, sol. 2, ad 2.

human will; and the older doctrine of *habitus fidei,* faith as a habit, was subordinated to a more dynamic view of justification, so that the movement of God, the *motio divina,* came to occupy a central place. Bouillard, whose view was later adopted by Chenu,[10] gave the following reasons for the appearance of these new ideas—Aquinas's increasing knowledge of the later works of Augustine, his more intensive study of the Bible and his discovery of Aristotle's *Eudemian Ethics*.

Seckler, however, goes deeper than this. It struck him particularly that the transition of Thomas's texts was quite abrupt. The evidence of this is to be found in many different elements, both in the terminology and in the contents of his writing at this time. Suddenly one finds repeated references to *pelagiani* (Semi-Pelagianism), each time connected with a quotation from the *Eudemian Ethics* (for the first time in *Contra Gentiles* III, c. 89, 147, 149). Bouillard, however, had not noticed that the concept *instinctus* also appeared at this very point in Thomas's works in connection with the act of faith. And it is a remarkable fact that the term *instinctus* played a part both in the Church's documents condemning Semi-Pelagianism and in the Latin translation of the *Eudemian Ethics*. The word *instinctus* is the only connection that can be established in Thomas's thought between anti-Semi-Pelagianism and these *Ethics* of Aristotle. Just as the danger of Semi-Pelagianism was averted in the writings of the [037]
Church Fathers by an appeal to the *instinctus divinus,* so too did this same term play a similar part centuries later in the works of Aquinas. On the basis of the Bible, the affirmation of the instinct of faith was given *scope* in Aquinas's doctrine thanks to his knowledge of the later works of Augustine, an *ontological structure* thanks to Aristotelianism and finally an *anthropological form* thanks to the Roman philosophy of law and Stoic ethics.

The new element to which prominence was given by the valorisation of the concept of *instinctus* in Thomas's teaching about faith is clearly illustrated in a text such as this: "not only has external or objective revelation the power to attract, but also an inner instinct impelling and moving to belief. . . . The Father draws many to the Son through an instinct, divine action *moving man's heart within to belief.*"[11] In this deepening of Augustine's doctrine thanks to the concept of *instinctus,* Thomas referred to three biblical texts:[12] Phil. ii. 13 ("For it

[10] *Introduction à l'étude de saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Montreal and Paris 1950, 236. Eng. trans., *Toward Understanding St. Thomas*, Chicago, 1964, 275.

[11] "... non solum revelatio exterior vel obiectum, virtutem attrahendi habet, sed etiam interior instinctus impellens et movens ad credendum. … Trahit multos Pater ad Filium per instinctum divinae operationis *moventis interim cor hominis ad credendum." Super Ev. Joa.* c. 6, lect. 5 (ed. Marietti 1952, n. 935); this is particularly apparent if this text is seen against the background of the text of Augustine that inspired it: *De spiritu et littera* 34 *(PL* 44, 240).

[12] Always in the context of his commentary on John vi. 44: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him."

is God who works in you, inspiring both the will and the deed, for his own chosen purpose"), Hos. xi. 4 (according to the Vulgate, which had the same idea of *tractus:* "in funiculis Adam traham eos in vinculis caritatis"—"with cords of man I shall draw them, and with bonds of love") and Prov. xxi. 1 ("The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of Yahweh; he turns it wherever he will"). Hearing the Message and appreciation of the value of what has been heard (the
[038] *Scriptum, De veritate*) were now seen to be borne up by a "divine instinct that prompts and moves us to believe." This is, as an explicit statement certainly, a *novum* in Thomas. The second part of Augustine's text ("either from without by gospel exhortations. . .or from within where no one can hinder what comes into his mind"),[13] which in Augustine had a psychological meaning, was clearly given a deeper, ontological significance by Thomas. It is evident that Thomas owed this renewed insight to a reading of Augustine against the background of the documents condemning Semi-Pelagianism (probably the *Indiculus* of Pope Celestine) which he had recently come across for the first time. Whereas Augustine had, in accordance with his neo-Platonism, seen the attraction or *tractus* of grace ("nemo venit ad me, nisi Pater *traxerit* eum"— John vi. 44) as God's drawing or attraction of man by way of a recognised value, Thomas took this idea onto a deeper level. In his case, it was not only external revelation, not only the proclaimed Message of the gospels that radiated this power of attraction, but also the *instinctus interior.* In this way, he gave to the inward psychological quality of Augustine's doctrine a deeper, ontological dimension. In other words, God personally brings about in man a sensitivity towards, a state of readiness to be addressed by, the value known "from what is heard"—the Good News of the gospels. This *instinctus interior* is, however, in Aquinas himself, a purely ontological, *formal* principle.[14] Still, Aquinas did not
[039] do away with the inward affective aspects of Augustine's teaching, but gave them a firm substructure with his ontological "instinct of faith." In fact God's "drawing" or attraction of man took place, in his view, in many different ways—both the *Mysterium tremendum* of God's Majesty and the power of attraction proceeding from Jesus' human appearance played a part in this.[15]

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[13] "… sive extrinsecus per evangelicas exhortations … sive intrinsecus, ubi nemo habet in potestate quid ei veniat in mentem." *Loc. cit.*

[14] This instinct is therefore not really something that is also psychical although not reflexive, or explicitly conscious as in the modern analyses, an *experience.* I should prefer not to discuss precisely at this point the question as to whether Thomas's doctrine, as, in my view, correctly analysed by Seckler, should not be extended by the affirmation of a non-conceptual but certainly affective conscious element that is present *as experience.*

[15] *Super Ev. Joa.* c 6, lect 5, n. 935: "persuadendo, demonstrando et alliciendo" (by persuading, demonstrating and alluring).

b. The Liber de bona fortuna*: the ontological structure.*

Aquinas went further with his analysis of this *instinctus interior.* His immediate source for this further ontological analysis was not the *Eudemian Ethics,* but the *Liber de bona fortuna,* which was attributed to Aristotle and contained passages from the *Eudemian Ethics.* Aquinas became familiar with this work in Italy (1259-1260), thus at about the same time that he came across the new conciliar documents. There is also a material connection—Aquinas refuted the Semi-Pelagian view of faith's beginning with arguments from this *Liber de bona fortuna,* as it is in this peripatetic *Liber* that the term *instinctus divinus* appears in the sense of a "divine instinct *bringing happiness,*" an instinct that makes man appreciate a value, and at the same time as an "instinct" that is conceived as a *moving principle (principium movens).* These peripatetic ideas provided Thomas with all the conceptual material that he needed to valorise ontologically, in his doctrine of the *instinctus fidei,* the affirmation of the *tractus fidei,* the drawing to faith, suggested by Scripture and elaborated by Augustine.

"Whoever believes has a *sufficient motive* to believe...; he is prompted to believe… especially by an *inner instinct from God drawing him"* (II—II, q. 2, a. 9, ad 3). This inward instinct of God that invites to faith is the mainstay of the [040] entire act of faith. "Faith is an intellectual consent under the impulse of the human will which is moved to this (consent) by God's grace" (II—II, q. 2, a. 9). This does not mean that Thomas, bearing in mind what he had taught in his earlier works, at this stage accepted a double motive for faith—both the appreciation of a value and the divine *motio.* The inward instinct of faith, as the beginning of the entire act of faith, is a tendency of the human spirit itself, but as set in motion by the God of salvation, through which an appreciation of the value of the Message that is heard is brought into being in man.[16] It is a question of a "gift of a divine instinct bringing happiness" and a "moving principle." It brings happiness (namely, a proclamation of salvation) because "through it men are indeed fortunate, since they are inclined to what is good by a movement from God, as appears in the chapter concerning good fortune."[17] Man, after all, makes his own happiness, appreciating what is objectively valuable as a value for himself, whenever he follows the divine instinct,[18] for in the orientation of this divine instinct an objective guarantee is given to the subjective experience of this value. But this instinct is not only something that brings happiness *verum sub ratione boni,* as a right relation to the good. It is also a moving principle—it not only makes us appreciate what comes from "what is

[16] See Seckler, 110.
[17] " … ex hoc homines vere sunt *bene fortunati,* quod per divinam causam *inclinentur ad bonam,* ut patet in cap. de Bona Fortuna" (*In 10 Ethic.* lect. 14).
[18] Seckler, 111.

heard" as a value for life, but it is also a divine power which enables us to make the act of consent as a *human* act—which, however, transcends our human powers.

[041] Up to this point, everything is satisfactory, and we are confronted with an astute historical analysis. But from here onwards, reading between the lines, one begins to sense a modern problem tempting the author to "eisegesis." The instinct of faith in the sense of "moving principle" may not, Seckler claims, be regarded as an *actual grace* acting efficaciously on man. On the contrary, "human nature as a centre of action that has once been constituted is a divine counsel become nature for the purpose of the realisation of the good."[19] The instinct of faith, as an "instinct for the divine," is—as appears from Seckler's further analysis—identified with the inherent tendency of human nature (the act of which is, for example, the *desiderium naturale)* or with the human concern with the Absolute.[20] Even before man is aware of this or that value (either philosophical or theological), he is already impelled by God towards the good. This impulse, given to human nature by the divine act of creation, is, together with the evangelical Message "from what is heard," sufficient to allow man freely to decide to consent to this message and live or to reject it and die. The "instinct" has therefore to be seen as a "continuation of creation" which is, on man's side, a "tendency that has become nature." What comes from hearing—"external revelation"—therefore only actuates man's supernatural potential which is prepared by grace and is still dormant (pp. 128-129). There is in man a primordial instinct, a "sympathy," for everything that has value and importance for him. This sympathy, Seckler maintains, is not a datum of experience and has no psychological value. It has a purely ontological significance, being "given with man's essential form" (p. 135).

c. Stoic ethics and philosophy of law: the anthropological analysis

[042] Seckler next makes an anthropological analysis of the instinct of faith (pp. 136 ff.). In this, the concept of *instinctus* in the early Church's condemnation of Semi-Pelagianism which was elaborated along Aristotelian lines by Aquinas is closely linked with the idea of "natural law" coming originally from Stoic sources and elaborated by Isidore of Seville and the early scholastic canonists. The ontologically interpreted *instinctus naturae,* natural instinct, was the source of many different tendencies and, via these tendencies, the basis of the "natural law."

[19] P. 114, with a reference to Cajetan, *In I-II* q. 9, art 4.
[20] Thomas's commentary on 2 Cor. iii. 1: "Hoc etiam Philosophus vult..." ("This the Philosopher means...") plays an important part here.

The human intellect is the organ through which the "primordial instinct" or "primordial sympathy" is made conscious (p. 140). This primordial instinct, seen as tendency, as *forma* tending towards, is there before all consciousness and before all *de facto* will and action. In all respects, a creature is a *movens motum*—not only moves but is moved. That is its creaturely condition. But the object's appearing as a value is an indispensable condition for concrete human action. Every human act is in this way embedded in an instinct of love, in the subject's being seized, in sympathy, by values. I strive towards a value which I can appreciate as a value for myself. Every desire of the will is a dynamic consequence of an idea or *representation* of a value, but, on the other hand, only that which corresponds to a natural tendency is represented as a value. Knowledge is therefore, both prospectively and retrospectively, embedded in a dynamism of striving. Via the representation of a value the natural tendency becomes a conscious striving towards a value (pp. 143-145).

But, just as all human knowledge, "coming partly from within ... partly from without" *(De veritate* q. 19, a. 6, Seckler, p. 147), has in itself a universal, intentional scope which is, however, made particular by many different contacts with the outside world, so too do we find a double orientation in the interior instinct. The primordial instinct is a sort of "pre-evangelical climate" that is "addressed" by the Message of the gospels. The inward element is [043] essentially directed in its intention towards that which comes from without. It is in contact with the evangelical Message as a *bonum repromissum* or Promise that the instinct of nature develops into an instinct of faith.

The primordial instinct and the instinct of faith are, however, not identical in man. The "law of grace" includes two elements—the inward element of grace and the outward communication by the revelation of the Word (II—II, q. 106, a. 1 and a. 2). Seckler calls the inward grace of faith simply a "formal openness to a sphere of reality."[21] This formal definite character which, like every *forma,* has an inherent tendency, must, however, be *interpreted* and so to speak objectively defined by what comes "from what is heard." The initially relatively undefined character of the grace of faith[22] requires the *determinatio fidei,* the contribution of the explicit content of faith, and this comes "from what is heard."[23] In the ontological sense, the tendency of the light of faith is "univocal." It is not, however, univocal in the psychological sense—in the case of one person, it is revealed in restlessness, in the case of another, in a consciousness of sin, in a dissatisfaction with the world's fulfilment of human

[21] P. 153. This seems to me to be completely correct as a historical interpretation of Thomas.
[22] See *In 3 Sent.* d. 24. q. 1. a. 3, sol. 3, ad 3.
[23] "Fides ex auditu" ("Faith comes from hearing"); see *In 3 Sent.* d. 25, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 1; SCG III, c. 154; *In Ep. ad Rom.* 10, lect 2 (ed. Marietti 1953, n. 844).

expectations. External revelation, the evangelical Message, "informs" these uncertain, groping tendencies of man. The revelation in Word, preaching, christianity in this way "inform" the psychologically blind instinct of faith of the "inclined heart." Inwardly illuminated in this way, "objective faith" is born
[044] in the decision of the free human will. "Believing is the informing of a tendency" (p. 155). The reality of salvation grasped in faith thus also possesses, as *truth,* a relationship of finality—the saving value is accepted as truth *sub ratione boni.* Believing is a "verdict guided by a value" (p. 155), a judgment of consent contained in the appreciation of a value. The beginning of faith is situated in the heart—"in affectione" *(De veritate,* q. 14, a. 2, ad 10).

How, then, are the two Thomist affirmations—we believe on the authority of the God of revelation and we believe by virtue of the appreciation of a value—related to each other? Aquinas's answer to this is given in the context of the medieval formula, believing is "credere Deum, Deo et in Deum." The object of faith consists of saving truths, of values for our life, and the value of what is testified to play a part in the act of faith. On the other hand, the value of what is testified to depends on the value of the witness. In God, the witness—according to his competent authority—and that which is testified to—according to its qualitative value —are identical. In its root, faith is an act of salvation, an act in which a decision is made concerning the "to be or not to be" of our life.[24]

It is, therefore, thanks to the inward instinct of faith that we recognise the outwardly heard Message as *conveniens,* or as a value for life. A definite content for life, presented or preached to us, is recognised as the answer to the deepest tendencies of the human will (p. 156). The will, which by the dynamism of the instinct of faith is brought within the sphere of influence of this value presented to it by hearing, draws the intellect (which, in itself and of its own accord, proceeds along the slow path of verification and argument) along with it in the direction which the Message proposes. On this basis, the human person
[045] ultimately makes the decision as to whether he will venture in this direction or not—the decision is taken and the act of faith is made or it is refused. In all this there is, therefore, no question of intuitions of faith, of affective intuitions of the content of faith. We perceive this content of faith from what is heard (we see it in the life of the Church), but it is only recognised as a value that has meaning for us because it corresponds to a tendency of the human spirit, a tendency that goes back to the living God himself.

The inner involvement of human freedom in God in the religious act is *articulated* by the word of revelation into an explicit confession of articles of faith. Who, however, provides the guarantee of the objectivity of "what is

[24] See M. D. Chenu, *BThom,* pt. 1 (1931-1933), 97 and the following pages.

heard"? The instinct of faith does not, after all, entail any representational aspects. The "light of faith," which is identical with the "habit of faith" (p. 158), is a *principle* of knowledge in faith—it *makes something seen*.[25] But Seckler says that, according to Thomas, nothing is in fact seen in this light.[26] The light of faith makes the truth of revelation that comes from the evangelical message an authentic knowledge in faith by showing this datum "from what is heard" as valuable to whoever is confronted by the Message. In this way the light of faith brings about the act of faith in the free will.[27] It is clear from the context in which Aquinas again and again used the term "light of faith" that this light [046] guarantees not a certainty based on evidence *(certitudo evidentiae),* but a firmness in consenting to a non-evident truth *(firmitas adhaesionis).* From this, it is clear that a higher value is set on the "tendency" than upon the "light."

The "light of faith" or the "habit of faith" makes man positively open towards the really revealed truths. As a natural tendency, the inclination of this habit is in itself infallible, but the specification of it by what is presented from without is fallible. In other words, errors are possible in the *interpretation* of this tendency with regard to what comes from the community. On the other hand, faith terminates in the reality of salvation itself, the God of salvation, and properly speaking not in the *enuntiabilia* or the judgments of faith as such (II-II, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2). Insofar as the believer is, by virtue of the light of faith, orientated towards the divine reality of salvation itself, this light operates infallibly. This is, however, not the case when the believer begins to explicitate this real contact in faith with God in separate affirmations of faith. In such cases of material error, faith in the existential sense remains inviolate. The absolute guarantee of infallibility in respect of separate affirmations of faith is therefore situated by Aquinas in the teaching authority of the Church (II-II, q. 5, a. 3).

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[25] "Lumen fidei *facit videre* ea quae creduntur" ("The light of faith *causes us to see* the things that are believed"), as Thomas repeatedly says: see II—II, q. 1, a. 4, ad 3; q. 1, a. 5, ad 1; *In 3 Sent.* d. 2, a. 1, ad 4. Seckler, however, pays no attention to these texts, but prefers to consider other texts which appear to say the "opposite."

[26] "Lumen fidei *non* facit videre ilia quae creduntur" ("The light of faith does *not* cause us to see the things that are believed"); see *BT* I, q. 3, a. 1, ad 4, noting that Seckler quotes wrongly—q. 1.

[27] Nonetheless, Seckler seems not to attach very much value to the *lumen fidei.* All his attention is devoted to the *instinctus fidei.* The instinct is a *tendency,* whereas the *lumen,* of its very nature, illuminates. What is the meaning of a *light* producing a tendency? Seckler's laconic answer to this is that "this 'light' that produces a tendency has led to a great deal of ingenious guessing." I, however, welcome this matter-of-fact sobriety (pp. 158-159). All kinds of vague and "mystical" explanations of a certain *"experience* of faith" are in circulation at present, and nobody knows what is really meant by them.

3. The instinct of faith in the dialectics of nature and grace

This marks the beginning of the break with Seckler's interpretation, despite my
[047] complete approval of his intention in this chapter. Seckler's aim is to situate the instinct of faith in the life of historical mankind, in which he does not see the "natural" and the "supernatural" elements as divided into two levels, the one so to speak built up on the other. Grace, in his view, is not a "superstructure." Man's being is such that the beatific vision of God is "natural" to him, even though it transcends his powers and is therefore "supernatural." This is, of course, in the literal sense of the word, pure historical Thomism.[28] Whether Seckler explicitates this Thomistically, however, and whether this explicitation can —quite apart from the question as to whether it is Thomist —be theologically justified is another question, which I shall discuss later on. First of all, however, let us consider Seckler's argument.

The question which Seckler asks himself is this: Is there place for a "medium" between nature and grace? Is the instinct of faith "nature" or "grace"? It is immediately apparent that the background to this problem is Henri de Lubac's work *Surnaturel,* the difficulties of which were cleared up—this at least was the intention—by Karl Rahner and Hans Urs von Balthasar by their postulation of what they call the "supernatural existential," which is neither "human nature" in itself (in the abstract) nor "sanctifying grace." The background for Thomas himself is the affirmation of the *gratia media* in medieval Franciscan theology.

Briefly formulated, Seckler's view comes to this. God's *universal* creative activity—as continued in creation—is "converted" into a special creative activity, which is then identical with the instinct of faith, whenever it comes
[048] into contact with man, who, as a spiritual being, is by his very nature "receptive to grace." This occurs because of the special structure of this receiving subject, man. The divine activity which moves men towards natural and supernatural values is in itself one and the same—it is neither "natural" nor "supernatural," because in itself it can "scarcely be qualitatively defined" (p. 192). It is defined by that on which it has an effect, which is, in this case, human nature. Man's constitutive orientation, as a spiritual being, towards grace is therefore the explanation for the fact that God's creative activity in man becomes an instinct impelling and moving him to believe.[29] Faced with a spiritual being, the divine action, without which no creaturely activity is conceivable, is at the same time a

[28] See *BT* I. q. 2, a. 4, ad 5: "Quamvis homo *naturaliter* inclinetur in finum ultimum, non tamen potest naturaliter illum consequi, *sed solum per gratiam."* ("Though man is *naturally* inclined to his last end, yet he cannot attain it naturally, *but only by grace."*)

[29] See p. 191. "'Vocation' refers to the help of God moving and exciting the mind interiorly" (I—II, q. 113, a. 1, ad 3).

gratia oblata, and offer of grace. Faced with the God of creation, various participations in the one *motio divina* (creative activity) take place in and because of the structure of man's being. As a result of this, the *motio divina* is known sometimes as the "natural instinct," drawing us to faith, and finally as the instinct of grace. This is why, in its spiritual core, human nature is in principle a *promise of grace.* The instinct of nature becomes in the concrete sense a "gratia operans et praeveniens." *Concrete* human nature is itself a "call to grace," an instinct that impels us towards faith. That is, in Seckler's view, why Thomas, reacting against Semi-Pelagianism, did not incorporate a new supernatural instinct into human nature, but rather analysed the dynamism of human nature in the concrete. It is in any case clear that the instinct of faith is not identical with the state of grace; it is an *invitation* to this justification, a divine aid. This aid moves by stimulating; but this, in the concrete, means nothing other than the "transcendental movement of the creature towards the good, thanks to God" (p. 178). It is not "actual grace," nor is it "sanctifying [049]
grace," but rather "that movement of God which sets up in man the inner dimension of return" *(loc. cit.).* In continuing creation, God does not act on a creature that is already provisionally in existence—the entire evolutive mode of being and mode of being active is rather in a state of being created by God. Apart from sinfulness, which brings about confusion in everything, the human tendency towards the Absolute is the *divine* call that prompts us to *believe,* to give ourselves in faith to the one Being who can satisfy this natural openness. It is in this that the "remote preparation for grace" is, in Seckler's view, situated in Aquinas's later works. (See pp. 193-195.) It is in the *instinct of nature* that the ontological law for the transcendence of this nature is situated. Because of the inward orientation of nature towards the supernatural, there is, *beside* and *in* the instinct of nature, no need for a new divine impulse which would then be called an "instinct impelling to believe." "It is not in human nature to have faith; but it goes with human nature that man's mind does not reject the interior instinct and the external preaching of truth."[30]

Man's essential *being* is, viewed theologically, itself *a divine invitation to believe,* a possibility which, on hearing the evangelical Message, is freely accepted or culpably refused. As "pure man," man is "damned" (p. 200). Apart from all *gratia media* (a kind of means of linking the "natural" and the "supernatural"), man is, because of his spiritual being, orientated towards the supernatural. This finds clear expression in the natural desire. Aquinas did not look for the distinction between the natural and the supernatural —by means of

[30] ". . .instinctus impellens ad credendum." "Habere fidem non est in natura humana: sed in natura humana est, ut mens hominis non repugnet interiori instinctui et exteriori veritatis praedicationi." II—II, q. 10, a. 1, ad 1.

[050] which the gratuitous character of grace is saved—in a distinction between "abstract" human nature and "concretely historical" human nature (the direction followed by Rahner, Urs von Balthasar and others), but "through an ontology of first and second causality with regard to the creaturely spiritual being as an aptitude for transcendence" (p. 207).

It would certainly be possible to say all this if man were not in fact destined for divine life. It follows directly from a "transcendental analysis of the human spirit." The theologian, however, goes further. The human spirit is not changed by its *de facto* supernatural destiny. In the concrete the *instinctus interior,* man's "primordial instinct," becomes the *vehicle* of the divine vocation and destiny, for there is always a formal distinction between "man who is *capable of being called* and man who *is* called" (p. 212). The antithesis between "nature and grace" then becomes the correlation between "creation" and "covenant," the order of nature unto grace becomes an ordination. In concrete experience, it is therefore impossible to determine what is natural and what is supernatural in this *instinctus interior;* from the very first moment of man's existence, this existence is one that has been called to grace, and not simply a "request for grace." And, as a correlative to this *de facto* divine vocation to grace, something real must be present on man's side, something that is *more* in comparison with the natural capacity for grace—the reality of the factual state of being called (p. 213). What is more, this reality "must be a positive element in man's essential constitution, it must be *of grace, without actually being grace" (loc. cit.).* Rahner and von Balthasar see this reality in the "supernatural existential" (pp. 213-214), and, although he is not opposed to this view, Seckler does find it difficult to define the meaning of Balthasar's "existential" in this context. It is meant to point to
[051] the *obligatory* character of this destiny, although this concrete destiny cannot be a constitutive element of the essential being of human nature, but at most of man's "concrete being." Thomas, however, looks elsewhere for the solution to this problem. According to him, the structure of concrete man is no different from that of man who is possibly not called. The vocation remains therefore "extrinsic" to man—it is *God's will* that concrete man should be destined to receive grace. It is through God's "external" saving will that the "good of nature" thereby (allowing for the divine purpose) acquires a "new" meaning as a negative disposition towards the infusion of grace. In this way, the vocation is made internal without human nature being subjected to any change.

The divine vocation is communicated to man not only in verbal revelation but also "inwardly." This "inner vocation" prepares the ontological dimension (the *instinctus naturae)* by means of which man is made capable of listening to the Message. It is not human nature as nature, but the ontological *instinctus* that is the vehicle of this divine vocation (pp. 214-215). Although this "inward instinct" is a gratuitous gift, it nonetheless belongs to "nature" (p. 215). The

ontological finality of the *instinctus naturae* remains hidden from man so long as it is not *interpreted* by verbal revelation. As borne up by the God of creation who wills man's salvation, this natural primordial dynamism of man is at the same time an offer of grace. The one divine movement which leads all creatures, according to their innate character, back to their origin—which, in other words, "leads them home"—is given, in man's *spirit,* the name of "grace."

Man is, however, in fact a sinner and this conferment of grace thus becomes a justifying (p. 217 ff.). In the concrete, what is proposed to the instinct is the "grace of justification as an offer" (p. 218). It is thus sanctifying grace, not as a possession and appropriated in the act of justification, but as an *offer* to be [052] accepted. One and the same grace both calls and justifies ("grace infused, grace gained," I—II, q. 113, a. 8, ad 2).

This ontological instinct which, subject to God's vocation, is concretely an "instinct of faith" is operative in all kinds of psychological phenomena. Man is constantly coming across this divine offer of grace—it is his inescapable and fundamental human situation, even if he has not yet been confronted historically with the mystery of Christ (II—II, q. 89, a. 6). The psychological phenomena which have their most profound basis in this primordial instinct are of two kinds—the phenomenon of "restlessness," dissatisfaction with the finite, man's experience as a deficient, imperfect being and, on the other hand, his experience of a kind of orientation, resulting from his real (or supposed) discovery of the Absolute. All these elements can be found scattered about Aquinas's works. Man is a "paradox"—capable of encountering the personally Infinite, he is constantly meeting with finite things. His transcendental openness and his condition as a captive within this world form the basis of the highly characteristic "metaphysical restlessness" which either "afflicts" human life or positively "raises" it up. What we have to do with here is an "existential restlessness." Anxiety, wonder, questioning and still more questioning—these are the repeated effects, in our wordly situation, of the "primordial instinct" which is concretely a divine instinct moving and impelling man to believe. There is not a kind of "special organ" in man, as though there were a separate "religious sense" in him. It affects the whole of man and in it is revealed the "sacral character of being" (p. 224). The *instinctus interior* is therefore the source of all religiousness—that is, of man's involvement with the divine.

In the last part of his book, Seckler analyses the saving significance of the *instinctus interior* in connection with the opportunity of salvation for those to [053] whom the gospel is not preached.

In conclusion, Seckler says: "God did not create the will to believe and to be saved *in* man. Rather, he created a man whose disposition towards the path of salvation is situated in the cradle of his nature. It is therefore pointless to enquire whether the grace of faith begins in the intellect or the will. It does not

enter from outside into a psychology that is already functioning, but is given in that root of man's being in which distinctions become meaningless" (p. 261). In this way, Seckler himself provides an accurate summary of his intention in this "third section" of his book: "the instinct of nature is the *promulgated* will of God" (p. 264) and for this reason the *instinctus interior* is the "relationship of the subject to itself as due-to-be and due-to-be-such" (p. 264). In this perspective, faith is the bringing to fulfilment of a tendency which is prior to the hearing of the Message, but which only comes to itself in the listening to this gospel. That fundamental freedom created by the God of salvation which is man is a state of being called—an "offer of grace" which man must faithfully substantiate in himself. The content of faith is connected with this state of being called. "This instinct is, according to Thomas, the effective and sufficient inward cause for faith and salvation" (p. 261). The will to believe is therefore not a decision brought about by actual grace to enable man to regard a number of truths "as true," but the ethical expression of an ontological law, made concrete in confrontation with an actual historical Message. The instinct of faith is not a privilege of some men who in fact believe, but the vehicle of God's mercy directed towards all men. Aquinas thus provided the medieval doctrine of faith, which was above all psychologically orientated and owed its inspiration to Augustine, with an *ontological substructure* by the theological discovery of the
[054] *instinctus fidei*. In this way, he also gave this doctrine an *anthropological* extension.

2. CRITICAL REVIEW

In the foregoing section I have provided at least a broad outline of Aquinas's view of faith in accordance with Max Seckler's accurate—though sometimes amplificatory—analysis of Aquinas's texts. Since Seckler's book is primarily a historical analysis, we should not be daunted by the word *instinctus.* It would be right for a modern study of faith to avoid this word, as "instinct" and "religion" call quite different notions to the mind of modern man, and, what is more, the word *instinctus (motio)* is no longer appropriate to a more personally oriented view. But we are after all concerned with Aquinas's view of faith, and he was bound to express himself in the language of his time. First of all, let us briefly summarise this view.

1. Aquinas's view of faith

Commenting on the well-known text of St. John, "All that the Father gives me will come to me" (John vi. 37). Thomas says: "What we should notice in this text

is that not only the *habitus* must be included in this gift—that is, faith and so on—[31] but also the inner impulse to believe. For everything that he does for salvation is, in its entirety, a gift of God" *(Super Ev. Joa.* c. 6, lect. 4). By virtue of the *instinctus fidei (gratia operans)* or the *initium fidei,* man makes himself receptive towards this invitation (which thus becomes *gratia cooperans* in the act of reception) on hearing the Message of the gospels. Two characteristic texts [055] may serve to illustrate this: "For faith two things are required: one is an inclination of the heart towards belief, and this does not come from hearing, but from the gift of grace; the other is decision as to what is to be believed, and this does come from hearing"[32]; and "The calling of man is twofold; one is exterior, through the mouth of a preacher. The other is interior, it is simply an instinct of the mind, by which a man's heart is moved by God to assent to those things which are of faith or virtue."[33] According to Thomas, this inner vocation or the *instinctus fidei* was a *tractio Patris,* a drawing by the Father *(Super Ev. Joa. c.* 6, lect. 5), which, through the man Jesus in the power of the Spirit, inwardly invites the man who hears the Message of the gospel in his freedom to surrender to this Message and to the reality of salvation. The *tractio Patris* comes to us via Christ,[34] but Christ does this by virtue of the Holy Spirit.[35]

The act of faith is based entirely on this inner vocation as on its unique [056] foundation. In consenting to this inner vocation, man attains, supernaturally but in and through the inclination of his own heart, to the divine testimony on which he relies exclusively in order to accept the Message that he has heard (even though a rational verification of faith will also normally protect him here from any possible pseudo-experience). But this faith is not supported by any reasoning about God, who cannot deceive, but only by the inner experience of the concrete testimony of God's authority. This is an experience that the

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[31] Thomas means the *lumen fidei,* which is precisely the *habitus* of faith (*In 3 Sent.* d. 23, q. 2, a. 1, ad 4).

[32] "Ad fidem duo requiruntur: quorum unum est cordis inclinatio ad credendum et hoc non est ex auditu, sed ex dono gratiae; aliud autem est determinatio de credibili, et istud est ex auditu" *(In Ep. ad Rom.* 10, 17, lect 2).

[33] "Vocatio hominis est duplex: una exterior, quae fit ore praedicatoris. Alia vero vocatio est interior, quae nihil aliud est quam quidam mentis instinctus, quo cor hominis movetur a Deo ad assentiendum his quae sunt fidei vel virtutis" (*In Ep. ad Rom.* 8, 30, lect. 6).

[34] See *Quodl.* 2, q. 4, a. 1, ad 3:. "Interior instinctus quo Christus poterat se manifestare sine miraculis exterioribus, pertinet ad virtutem veritatis primae quae interius hominem illuminat et docet" ("The inner instinct by which Christ was able to show himself for what he was without external miracles pertains to the virtue of primary truth which illumines and teaches a man from within").

[35] See *Super Ev. Joa.* 14, lect. 6: "Nisi Spiritus Sanctus adsit cordi audientis, otiosus est sermo doctoris, . … et in tantum quod etiam ipse Filius Dei organo humanitatis loquens non valet, nisi ipsemet interius operetur per Spiritum Sanctum" ("Unless the Holy Spirit is in the hearer's heart, the teacher's word is fruitless … to the point that even the Son of God speaking with human mouth is unavailing unless he himself is worked upon inwardly by the Holy Spirit"). We can therefore call the instinct of faith an *instinctus Spiritus Sancti* (III, q. 36, a. 5; *In 4 Sent.* d. 13, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 1), although in these texts it is a question of divine impulses not directly towards faith, but to special acts of faith by believers.

message heard "is good for me"— the beliver "knows how good it is for him to give himself in this way to the truth of faith" *(De Divinis Nominibus* c. 7, lect. 5). Seckler says that the light of faith is a *formal* principle of knowing which manifests the Message heard as relevant (cf. p. 160), but he does not say what its relevance in fact is. Developing Seckler's notion and, in any case, "interpreting Thomistically," I would clarify this in the following way. The relevance in question here is the relevance as *revelation,* in other words, the aspect of "being testified to by God"—what comes to us "from what is heard" is *de facto* supremely relevant as said to me by God, and thus as divine revelation, by virtue of the *instinctus* of the light of faith. If then the light of faith, through its *instinctus,* invests the Message heard with relevance for me, this means that I attain to the truth of salvation held out to me, *precisely* (and *only)* in and through this divine instinct, *in the sense of* "truth revealed by God." In the light of faith I thus come to the "formal motive" of faith, and I therefore perceive the Message
[057] to be a personal message from God to *me.* I am, however, bound to admit, with Seckler, that the light of faith as such is, according to Aquinas's texts themselves, a purely formal *principle* of knowing that is informed by the "datum from what is heard," which is itself illuminated by this "inclusion" in the light of faith (it is, in this sense, invested with relevance).

2. The new elements in Seckler's analysis

What is distinctive in Seckler's book, in contrast to the view of the fundamental meaning of the grace of faith *(instinctus fidei)* that has been current for a long time, especially in Thomist circles, is to be found first of all in his genetic elucidation of Aquinas's recourse to *instinctus.* This genetic explanation, conducted almost on the lines of form criticism, seems to me to be flawless. The other new element in his analysis is his integration of this instinct of faith into Aquinas's general view of the relationship between nature and supernature. But it is precisely in the face of this explanation—which was intended by Seckler himself to set out aspects of Aquinas's texts which were merely implicit—that several questions have occurred to me. The fact that Aquinas is asked questions arising from a modern approach to problems (set in motion by Maréchal, de Finance, de Lubac, Heidegger and others)—questions which Aquinas did not ask explicitly himself—and that Aquinas is made to answer these questions from his own texts does not seem to me to be an improper procedure in itself. On the contrary, even though it carries the danger of eisegesis with it, it seems to me perfectly legitimate. To think theologically is always to think with others. We should not only be concerned with what Aquinas, for example, thought, but with the one *reality* which confronted Aquinas and which also confronts us centuries later. What is more, the study of
[058] history is not simply the making of a photocopy of the thought of someone who

has been dead for a long time. It is at the same time also a *thinking together with him* about the problems raised by him.[36] I do not, therefore, think any the worse of Seckler for making an analysis that often explicitates Aquinas's implicit thought (after his analysis of Aquinas's purely historical, explicit affirmations).

The question is, however, whether Seckler has accurately hit upon Aquinas's implicit idea in the explicitating analysis of the third section of part two of his book (pp. 171 ff.; the third section is also to some extent anticipated in the second section). I feel bound to say that everything would seem to point to this, and yet I am afraid that Seckler ultimately fails to appreciate Aquinas as a *doctor gratiae.* It is, however, not easy to situate this failure without doing Seckler an injustice. On the one hand, he says that the *instinctus naturae* and the *instinctus fidei* are identical—that is, materially—whereas, on the other hand, he recognises the existence of a formal distinction between them. There is certainly—according to Seckler as well—a formal distinction between man's ability to be addressed by God *(capacitas gratiae)* and his actual *destiny* and concrete *vocation* to the supernatural order of life. The natural "*ordo* ad gratiam" is, as such, not an "*ordinatio* naturae ad gratiam." In principle, Seckler is on safe christian ground here. His orthodoxy as a *believer* is therefore in no way in question.[37] Despite this clear formal distinction, however, Seckler nonetheless maintains that this *ordo* is in actual fact an *ordinatio* (a real destiny), purely by [059] virtue of God's saving will, without changing inwardly because of this. Man's positive but passive openness to grace belongs to his essential being. But, in *itself and of its own accord,* this is not yet a real vocation to the supernatural order—it is not a destiny in actual fact (Seckler admits this). This actual destiny is concretely contained in God's act of creation, and it is for this reason that Seckler believes that he can conclude that *concretely* the *ordo naturae ad gratiam* or (in Aquinas's *natura* terms) the *instinctus naturae* is an *instinctus fidei,* an offer of grace and an invitation to believe. Materially, nothing is changed, yet the normal openness of the human spirit to the Absolute becomes, through *this* creation, not only a quest for grace (which belongs to the essential being of our humanity), but also a concrete *offer* of grace, a grace which in fact already prompts us to make the act of faith. "Nature" is a concrete offer of grace, not on the basis of its having been created, but on the basis of its having been created by a God *of salvation.*

What I especially welcome in this solution is the care which the author takes not to situate man's *factual* state of being destined to the supernatural

[36] There is always still an appeal to modern man in the thought of a philosopher or a theologian who has been dead for a long time. The significance of the past changes with the new light that the present is always throwing on it.

[37] It is well to say this explicitly, because sometimes theologians suppose —wrongly—that when their thinking on some point is challenged the orthodoxy of their faith is being questioned.

order in a kind of "intermediary" between nature and supemature, as Rahner and von Balthasar have tried to do, reacting against de Lubac. But an intermediary or "linking reality" of this kind is useless and in itself meaningless, because the problem of the relationship between nature and supernature is in this way only transferred to the relationship between nature and this "intermediary," which is not natural and yet is not sanctifying grace either. But with this agreement with Seckler's deepest intention, my agreement with Seckler, both as an exegete of Thomas and *secundum rei veritatem* (which is the most important consideration), must end. Both Seckler and the originators
[060] of the "supernatural existential" have, in my opinion, been led astray by an illusion of perspective, that is, by the fact that the sinner also continues to be really called and to live in a supernatural order. This is why Rahner and von Balthasar try to establish, as the term of God's saving destiny, a reality even for those who are not in grace, the "intermediary" of the supernatural existential in human nature, whereas, Seckler, leaving human nature simply nature, calls *this* nature *concretely* the term of God's saving destiny.

Let us, however, first of all clear up a misunderstanding, for in this way it will become apparent that Seckler has certainly seen something that is important. Within the framework of Aquinas's philosophy of *nature,* the *instinctus naturae* does really go out to the absolute good and therefore to the beatific vision of God, although it cannot reach this under its own power. We only know this, however, by reflection *(discretio rationis).* Man's actual orientation towards God in himself does not, in any case, take place "mechanically"—it is a *free action* on man's part.[38] It is only through the mediation of the concrete representation of God as a value that the *instinctus naturae* is, according to Aquinas, impelled towards God. Does this mean that the *instinchis naturae* is, together with the representation of the evangelical Message as a value, sufficient to provide the *instinctus naturae* with the sense of an *instinctus fidei?* This cannot be claimed even on the basis of Aquinas's implicit ideas. Aquinas was, after all, too deeply convinced that, however open man might be, as a spirit, to receive grace, his spirit was itself completely powerless to take even one step in the direction of grace. The positive quest for grace, which this spirit is, does not, in his view, signify a real offer of grace.
[061] What it does signify for him is that, if God offers grace, this grace is not a "foreign body" in our life, but meaningful to human life; indeed that it is only this grace that makes human life *personally* meaningful. In this sense, the supernatural is, for Aquinas, already visible in our human state, but simply as a distantly visible horizon. It is in the spirit that the religious life is born.

[38] See *Verit.* q. 28, a. 4, ad 2: "Illud ad quod homo trahitur, aliquo modo *ad liberum arbitrium pertinet."*

Aquinas does not ask himself explicitly whether even the natural "desire for God" is an expression in the concrete of God's saving will. This is, of course, a modern question, but it may be possible, from this modern approach to the problem (which has been raised especially since Baius), to ask Aquinas this question. If we do this, then we find that, in Aquinas's view, concrete man (the *natura instituta)* was created only in order to achieve beatific communion with God. This does not, however, mean that the *instinctus naturae* itself has become a concrete offer of grace. Man's complete helplessness in the theological sphere imposes an impassable barrier here. Man's state as a spirit is as such not an *offer of grace*. It is not even a *promise* of grace in the real sense of the word. Aquinas therefore makes a clear distinction between the desire for God on the basis of the *instinctus naturae* that we freely explicitate, by a *discretio rationis* from our own conscious being in this world, in the direction of God,[39] and the real offer of grace that enables us, in a completely new manner, to take our first step towards God.[40]

That *in God* the act of creation (by means of which God calls man's spiritual dynamism into existence and continues to sustain it) is identical with his act of [062] salvation (by means of which he calls this dynamic and open spirit to intersubjective communion with himself) does not bring us any nearer to a solution of the problem as to how this "movement" on God's part is in fact accomplished in man. It cannot, however, mean that the *instinctus naturae* is therefore *concretely* an *instinctus fidei.* There is certainly a distinction between man's natural *"finalisation"* (as a spirit or person) towards personal communion with God and what he is actually being destined for. The finalisation is essentially contained in the creation of a formally spiritual being. Being destined, on the other hand, is an act of salvation and therefore an offer of grace. I wonder whether the two interpretations—Seckler's "naturalising" tendency on the one hand, and Rahner's and von Balthasar's appeal to a "supernatural existential" that is distinct both from "nature" and from "grace" on the other—do not in fact lose sight of one simple fact. That is that the term (in man) of real *destination* for the supernatural order is precisely sanctifying grace itself, in other words, a man's real situation in a supernatural order, either in the mode of acceptance (sanctifying grace or real intersubjective union with God) or in the mode of refusal (the real condition of sinfulness). Why, then, look for another reality—a "linking" reality like the supernatural existential, or a

[39] In 4 Sent. d. 49. q. 1, a. 3, sol. 3, ad 1; *Verit.* q. 22, a. 7; these and many other texts are not mentioned by Seckler.

[40] This is very marked in *In Ep. II ad Cor.* c. 5, lect. 2, where the distinction is clearly made between God as the *auctor desiderii naturalis* (the author of natural desire) and God as the *auctor desiderii supernaturalis* (the author of supernatural desire). The second is only possible, not on a basis of the instinct of nature but by the *infusion* of a supernatural spirit, that is, the Holy Spirit.

bold solution identifying the offer of grace with our humanity, which is only a powerless call for grace? As a reality in man, man's being destined to the supernatural order is nothing but the fruit of this *efficacious* saving will of God—the *de facto* state of being admitted into God's friendship or, in the case of the man who is not in a state of grace, his *real* condition of sinfulness. In God, there is no difference between a project and its execution. The destination itself is effective, that is, it constitutes the covenant between God and man. A reality
[063] *in* man which, being neither "nature" nor "grace" nor "historical nature," is supposed to be the term of the supernatural destination, as a preliminary (at least according to logical priority) to the real gift of grace, is quite unacceptable. Seckler's proposition that man's factual being destined supernaturally, as a reality *in* man, is "of grace, without actually being grace" (p. 213) seems to me to be the fundamental error, not only of Seckler's entire argument, but also of Rahner's and that of von Balthasar.

The openness of the human spirit of God, man's receptiveity to grace, does not suddenly become, by means of a purely extrinsic divine decree, a concrete offer of grace. This decree—God's saving will—is God's offering of himself to receptive man who, precisely by virtue of this offer, is enabled *de facto* to accept this offer and to enter into the Covenant. *In* man himself, the real offer of sanctifying grace is not only formally but also materially something quite different from his spiritual openness to the absolute and to everything dynamic that may result from this, although this "quite different" element is certainly geared to this openness. I am, of course, bound to admit that, outside the revelation in word, man has no explicit and conscious awareness, in his living experience, of any difference between what derives from the transcendental openness of his spirit (or, to use Aquinas's terms, the *instinctus naturae)* and what derives concretely from God's invitation in grace (Aquinas's *instinctus fidei).* But to identify the one with the other and to save the distinction simply by affirming that the Creator is the God of the Covenant strikes me as a failure to understand the transcendence of grace precisely *in* man. This is the fateful consequence of Seckler's failure to consider, after his very accurate analysis of Aquinas's concept of *instinctus,* Aquinas's very important and closely related concept of *voluntas ut natura,* together with his identification of the *instinctus*
[064] *naturae* in man with a preconscious tendency of nature in a direction which elicits all kinds of psychological phenomena from man in his contact with the world.

3. God's continuous act of creation

I suspect, however, that Seckler still has ammunition to spare and takes recourse to the idea of *creatio continua.* What he will say is that the *instinctus naturae* becomes concretely an *instinctus fidei* by virtue of God's continuous act

of creation, and he would appear to have Aquinas on his side here. It is, after all, a known fact that Aquinas equated the *exitus* from God with the "natural order" and the *reditus* (of spiritual beings) to God with the order of grace.[41] Now God's activity in leading back is nothing but his continuous creation. Seckler's interpretation of this is that the continuous act of creation, by means of which God takes his creature to its final goal *(conversio),* makes the *instinctus naturae* an instinct of faith. In this, however, he forgets that Aquinas was not asking himself the modern question which arises in this connection, because the gratuitous character of grace was not a problem in the Middle Ages and was presupposed in all cases.

According to Seckler, the act of continuous creation itself is the grace of conversion (reditus, conversio) in the religious sense. Since there is in man a natural tendency to transcend himself (this is in fact the real nature of his spiritual being), God's creatio continua de facto gives this self-transcendence, in Seckler's view, to man. But this is quite beyond my comprehension! I can only see that man, despite his humanising activity in making history, comes by the continuous act of creation precisely to the concrete experience of his own lack of power to transcend himself by his [065] own efforts. Man's actual transcendence of himself (in the sense of a trans-ascendence) cannot therefore be explained in terms of the *instinctus naturae.*

It is, of course, true that God's concrete saving will, the act of conferring grace, is of its very nature a *divine* act— that is, an absolute act—and this always means a "creating from nothing." The conferment of grace itself implies an act of creation and therefore an aspect of continuous creation. In other words, in the conferment and reception of grace, even to the point of the beatific encounter with God, God remains the creator and the recipient of grace remains a creature. While God draws man intimately into his friendship, this movement still contains an element of creation, which puts a distance between God and man. But the conferment of grace is more than creation, and for this reason the one who receives grace is more than a man—he is a son of God. The fullness of human life is in fact superhuman—it is divine life in a human subject. And however much we may stress that grace is an *inward* fulfillment of human life, we should all the more place full emphasis on the fact that this life-fulfillment is a transcendent completion of our humanity. This is naturally implied in the essence of christianity as a self-transcendence by virtue of grace. Nonetheless, we do at the same time find, *in* this self-transcendence, the best of ourselves

[41] See, for example. *In 1 Sent.* d. 14, q. 2, a. 2; d. 15, q. 4, a. 1; see also *De Sacramentele Heilseconomie,* pt. 1, Antwerp, 1952, especially 10.

included as an additional gift. Nature and grace are thus, in their existential unity, still distinct.

In creation, God constitutes a creature, as participation of God, in its own value. In conferring grace, however, he gives *himself* as a gift to man (this divine giving being, once again, naturally a creative giving). The conferment of grace is the divine—and therefore creative—act, by means of which man is drawn into an intersubjective, theologal relationship with the living God. (This is the
[066] formal element in the act of conferring grace; the created quality, *gratia creata,* is nothing but the necessary divine mode of this act.) That is why the initiative in grace which draws us into this intersubjective relationship cannot, even at the first stage of real offer, be materially identical with the dynamism of our human spirit itself. It is, on the contrary, a question of our being personally taken hold of by the God of salvation who reveals himself inwardly (and outwardly) to us (that is, *to* our transcendental openness) in an act that is at the same time creative, so that we experience—however confusedly—*in ourselves* this divine invitation while hearing the Message that is held out to us. It cannot take place in the manner suggested by Seckler, that is, God's one creative activity *(creatio continua)* being determined *by* the real nature of our humanity—in other words, by our spiritual being, and being "formed" into a saving activity, the gratuitous character of which is only to be found in the gratuitous nature or freedom of the act of creation itself.

We certainly ought not to regard the invitation in grace, distinct though it may be from the dynamism of our human spirit, either as extrinsic or as a physical impulse. We are addressed, in the divine invitation to faith, by someone who is the inner, absolute ground of our existence, *interior intimo meo,* "more intimate to me than I to myself." The experience of God *as* God—this is exclusively the definition of the beatific vision of God (and even then the divine gesture which puts a distance between God and man because it is a creative gesture is still present in the very act of eschatological self-revelation). In this sense, every direct intuition of God's testimony of himself, however confused, must be totally rejected as the basis of our faith. God's testimony of himself is experienced *in ourselves.* We experience grace where we experience our humanity, and where we experience our humanity, we also concretely
[067] experience grace, because we are confronted in our freedom with grace-God, that is, with the divine saving will which is actively concerned with us. What we ultimately *experience* is only our human existence that is personally addressed by God and informed by grace—we are associated with God himself only *in faith.* We do not experience God's speaking to us in itself—since this is God himself—but as a reality in our life. That is why we cannot, *outside the revelation in Word,* distinguish grace from nature—that is, from human life. The spiritual subject that comes into contact with God in faith is a physical subject

and, what is more, its physical nature is *terrestrial.* This means that grace is, in all its aspects and dimensions, entirely bound up with our life in this world. We know thematically and reflectively that nature is not grace, but this is not *distinct* in our living experience.

If this had indeed been what Seckler intended to affirm, then I should have agreed entirely with his argument—he was, after all, just in front of a door which would have given him a far better access to the mystery of grace than the door that von Balthasar had opened. But his intention was precisely to affirm, thematically and reflectively, the identity between the *instinctus naturae* and the *instinctus fidei,* and Thomist spirituality (and perhaps even Dominican spirituality as a whole), the mainstay of which has always been the primacy and the gratuitous nature of grace even though it has always held dear the idea that *gratia supponit naturam,* can only reply to this with a simple *non possumus.*

4. The twofold application of the concept of *instinctus interior*

The significance of Aquinas's term *instinctus interior* plays a very important part in Seckler's interpretation. In itself, this concept has a neutral meaning, covering a wide field—it can be applied to the lowest and to the highest inward [068] forms of dynamism, to natural and to supernatural forms. The concrete meaning of the term is determined by the context. This does not mean that, since both the dynamism of the human spirit and the *initium fidei* are called an *instinctus interior,* it is possible to identify the two *realities* because of this semantic unity of meaning. In fact, Seckler fails in his interpretation of Aquinas simply because he confuses the unity of meaning of a word with the field to which it can be applied[42]. When he uses the term *instinctus divinus interior,* Aquinas always alludes to one and the same divine, and therefore creative, activity. This activity is purely creative if it is concerned with the creative preservation of the *natura.* It is, on the other hand, the divine mode of the activity of grace if it is concerned with the divine preservation (or bringing into existence) of the life of grace.

It is a pity that Seckler, who has gone so carefully into the history of the word *instinctus,* did not also do equally careful research into the term *lumen,* because this provides the real indication of the difference between *instinctus naturae* and *instinctus fidei.* It is precisely this "light" which points to the transcendent character of grace, and it is the "divine instinct" which points to the one absolute divine activity which preserves either the life of nature *(natura humana, lumen naturale)* or the life of grace *(lumen infusum).* There are irrefutable

[42] A. Reichling's book, *Het Woord. Een studie omtrent de grondslag van taal en taalgebruik,* Nijmegen, 1935, would have drawn Seckler's attention to this frequently occurring confusion.

texts to be found again and again in support of this in the single article of *In Boethium de Trinitate* I, q. 1. The meaning of *operatio divina* and *novi luminis additio* is clearly apparent in this article, and also from ad 1, ad 2, ad 6 and ad 7
[069] of this article, where there is reference to *instinctus divinus* as against the *novum lumen*. According to Seckler, the one neutral movement of God *(instinctus interior)* becomes an *instinctus fidei* by virtue of the real nature of the *forma* which is grasped by this divine movement, in other words, the *forma humana* that is "open to God." It is by the nature of this specifically human openness that the one neutral divine movement is inwardly specified as an instinct of faith. This may well be Molinism, but it is certainly not an authentic interpretation of Aquinas.

Seckler loses sight of the fact that the *forma inhaerens,* with which we have to do in connection with the instinct of faith, is not the *forma humana,* but the new *forma* (that is already accepted or at least offered), in other words, the "light of faith." It is in any case quite clear from the texts of *In Boethium de Trinitate* mentioned above (to give only one example) that the single activity that is creative because it is divine—the activity that is always called *instinctus interior* or *motio divina* in respect of creaturely (either natural or supernatural) activity—is called *actual grace* if (to use Aquinas's words) it directly takes hold of (or offers) the new *lumen infusum,* but is a purely natural *motio divina* insofar as it takes hold of the *lumen naturale (natura humana)* as such. In other words, the meaning of the divine *instinctus interior* points as such only to the creative mode of God's activity, and does not of itself indicate whether it is a question of a divine act in connection with man's natural or his supernatural life. The *instinctus fidei* is therefore a divine creative act *(instinctus interior)* as a dimension of or as the divine mode of an *act of the conferment of grace* (that is, the *infusio luminis fidei vel gratiae* or its preservation), whereas the *instinctus naturae* is an *instinctus divinus* in connection with continuous creation of the
[070] *gubernatio*[43]. It is a question of what God's activity brings about (or what is creatively borne up by his activity)—a natural or a saving value. Thus, man's secular, humanising activity (as an aspect of the concrete *conversio ad Deum)* is

[43] See *BT* I, q. 1, a. l, ad 7: "Voluntas numquam potest bene velle sine *divino instinctu;* potest autem bene velle sine gratiae infusione, sed non meritorie. Et similiter intellectus non potest sine *divino motu* veritatem quamcumque cognoscere, potest autem sine *novi luminis* infusione, quamvis non ea quae naturalem cognitionem excedunt." ("The will can never will well without the *divine instinct;* it can indeed will well, though not meritoriously, without the infusion of grace. Likewise the intellect cannot know any truth at all unless God moves it, but it can know without the infusion of *new light*—though not things which exceed natural knowing power.") It is quite clear from this text that *instinctus divinae* can mean both actual grace and the general *motio divina* without which no creature is active (in other words, creaturely activity remains borne up by God's creation). In both cases, we have to do with one and the same divine, and therefore creative, activity. But this is called *actual grace* if it is formally a question of a divine *saving* (and also creative) activity.

equally borne up by a divine *instinctus interior,* but this should not therefore be identified with the religious *conversio* which only takes place by virtue of an offer of grace (and thus also by a divine *instinctus interior,* since this is just the absolute manner of God's activity). In the one case, the *instinctus interior* is a divine offer of creaturely values. In the second case, it is an offer of supernatural values (of a *lumen novum).*

If the idea of the *lumen* is lost sight of, then, there is every chance that the *instinctus naturae* and the *instinctus fidei* will be identified, because the *instinctus divinus* as such points only to the divine and therefore creative activity either in the natural order or in the order of grace. It therefore seems to me to be quite consistent that Seckler (and indeed Bouillard as well), after having devoted his attention exclusively to the *instinctus interior* of faith and having devoted only a few pages to the *lumen fidei,* should inevitably conclude by identifying the grace of faith as an offer with the (blind) dynamism of the human spirit and thus [071] ultimately interpret the old christian idea of the beginning of faith *(initium fidei)* unbiblically. Thus he fails to perceive that, in the process of development towards the act of faith *(conversio),* the *instinctus fidei* is an inward instinct offering us in grace a *novum lumen* (it is an "instinct bringing happiness") and at the same time prepares us, or enables us freely to accept the offer (it is a *sufficiens inductivum).* To reduce this offer of grace to the *instinctus naturae*—even if this nature is not viewed philosophically, but theologically, and therefore as created by a God of salvation—completely undermines the biblical message of God's *agapē.*

Our human state is a constitutive but at the same time powerless *need* for grace, and to such an extent that, without grace, this humanity is personally meaningless.[44] Humanity itself can, however, never be the *initium fidei,* and can never of its own accord be a *de facto* offer of grace. It is only in the warmth of God's saving love, to which (perhaps only implicit) consent has been given, that our humanity becomes a grace. It is in this way that we become an offer of grace for each other or the concrete form of the *initium fidei* which through God's grace also feels its way in our fellow men. We can, by virtue of God's saving will that is active everywhere and in everything, escape this grace nowhere (although we can refuse it). Wherever we turn, God's grace is always there ahead of us. His face confronts us in everything. Is it, in that case, a bold affirmation to state that it is not so very easy *not to believe* (even though a person may casually assert that he does not believe)? Human weakness, even human wickedness, is always weaker than the triumphant power of God's grace. I feel [072] that this is undoubtedly Seckler's deepest intention, but why then does he say it

[44] Seckler struck a more fortunate note when he called this, correctly, a "pre-evangelical climate" (and not the incipient evangelical climate of the *initium fidei).*

in an explicit theology that identifies the miracle of grace with the cheerless limits of our finite nature, which can only be the hollow side of grace? And why does he only stress the fact that we find *ourselves* only in faith? That is, of course, certainly true, but is it not far more glorious to find in faith the wholly Other who places our life on an entirely different plane and is for us far more than simply an answer to the philosophical problem of our life?

5. Looking forward from Aquinas's view

I should, however, not choose to look for the explicitation and extension of Aquinas's view of the light of faith and of the *instinctus fidei* (that is, the grace that invites us to believe) in the direction followed by Seckler, in other words, in the blind dynamism of the human spirit. I should prefer to look in a direction which, in keeping with Newman's "idea-impression," would provide a clearer analysis of how the so-called "ontological dimension" of faith (the light of faith) brings about a non-reflective, non-thematic and therefore confused *experience* in man (confused in the sense of being impossible to point out directly). To express this more precisely,[45] the inward divine invitation to believe is itself a (non-reflective) *experience* on man's side, an experience which, on reflection and in the light of the revelation in Word, can and must, however, be understood as coming from grace.

[073] The problem of the meaning of the inward instinct of faith and of the external datum of faith can also be resolved in a less "formal" manner than in the theology of the Middle Ages with the help of a more refined anthropology. (By this I mean a study of man who comes to himself in and through the world, finds himself only in the world and is therefore always bound to experience God's call in a human form that is intimately involved with this world.) Although it is clear that the full inspiring force of Aquinas's view of faith can only emerge as relevant for present day reflection about the structure of the act of faith if it is divorced from the philosophy of *nature* with which it was so closely associated in Aquinas's synthesis, Seckler has nonetheless allowed the essence of this view to remain firmly within Aquinas's physical, "naturalist" framework.[46] The more obvious direction in which to seek the solution to this problem would be in that of the openness of the knowing and willing person who is confronted with a mystery which presents itself to him personally and to

[45] I do not believe, as Seckler does, that the non-conscious aspect, or, as he calls it, the ontological aspect, has a greater ontic density than the psychological aspect.

[46] He has in fact embedded it even more deeply in this framework, by calling Aquinas's *desiderium naturale videndi Deum* a purely ontological, *blind* natural dynamism.

which he can only give his consent in the power of the living God. Yet Seckler[47] has attempted to find the solution in the direction of the blind dynamism of the spirit which permeates everything, including the intellect, and, penetrating to the intellect, arouses consciousness.

Philosophical analysis of our human experience reveals in man a positive openness to the Absolute, over which man, by definition, has no power—God must hold out his hand to man in grace, calling to him creatively to *come.* The *instinctus* in its original Greek meaning of *enthousiasmos* (with which Aquinas was familiar and which he quoted) might well have provided Seckler with a better indication of the direction in which he should have looked. "Enthusi- [074]
asm" implies not only a being attracted, but also an *experience,* a state of being moved that is experienced in the person himself, but cannot of its own accord be explained by him because a deeper mystery is active within it.[48] Seckler places too low a value on the real aspect of experience that is present in the act of faith. In Seckler's view, grace becomes something rather like a non-conscious modality of human life (a typical affirmation of anti-Reformation theology), as though grace were a pure entitative elevation of our existence without our human psychology being affected by this process! There certainly is a non-conceptual element of experience in faith in Aquinas's pre-Reformation synthesis, even though this is embedded in his concepts and affirmations of faith (the *enuntiabilia).* Insofar, however, as there is an *experience* in faith, this experience does not refer directly to God's revelation of himself (this would be a *visio beata),* but to the value and the relevance of the truths of salvation to our human life. The experience refers to our human existence, to a certain state of *being moved* in this existence that cannot be explained from the human point of view, but that is experienced as a gift from elsewhere, a gift that, on reflection, can only be explained as a *grace*— the work of God's spirit in us.

Seckler too recognises that there is a non-conceptual element in the act of faith, but in his case this non-conceptual element is a blind unconsciousness, a not knowing—non-conceptual because it is not conscious. The author of this remarkable book has therefore, in this sense, missed a valuable opportunity. [075]
This is all the more regrettable because Seckler's teacher, Prof. J. Möller[49] (whom he does not, however, mention in his book) and Prof. M. Müller's book[50]

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[47] Perhaps inspired by J. Maréchal (whom he does not quote), possibly via the "action philosophy" of J. de Finance, *Etre et agir dans la philosophie de saint Thomas,* Paris 1943, which is mentioned in his bibliography, and therefore by M. Blondel.

[48] See I, q. 87, a. 2, ad 1: "Fides ... *percipitur* ab eo in quo est, *per interiorem actum cordis."* ("Faith ... is *perceived* by him in whom it is *through an interior act of the heart.")* Texts such as this have escaped Seckler's attention.

[49] Möller's works include, for example, *Existenzialphilosophie und katholische Theologie,* Baden-Baden 1952.

[50] *Sein und Geist,* Tubingen, 1940.

(which is listed in his bibliography) could at least have helped to rectify, by means of the philosophy of Heidegger, his rigidly applied philosophy of the dynamism of the spirit. He would indeed have found a clear warning—by overstatement in the opposite direction—against his identification of the revelation of being *(instinctus naturae)* and the inward revelation of salvation *(instinctus fidei)*. Or is it simply that Seckler has ultimately only confused Heidegger's ontological *theiology* with theology proper? It is probable that this Heideggerian approach forms the background of Seckler's interpretation of Aquinas, but I cannot say this with any certainty. Very great concessions have certainly been made here to the demand for secularisation—indeed, they go too far for us still to believe in it. And I have not even raised the question of how reformed christians will react to an invitation to believe that in no way differs from Aristotle's *naturalis appetitus boni!* It should, however, be borne in mind that these objections apply only to pp. 171-219 of Seckler's book, since the author's analysis of the structure of the act of faith according to Aquinas is undoubtedly the best that we have at present. Seckler has done even more than this—he has shown in this analysis how Aquinas, as a theologian, is still an inexhaustible source of inspiration for the solution of very modern problems. For Aquinas is indeed a source of inspiration, but not to those who choose to divorce themselves from the present-day experience of human existence and its analysis in modern philosophy and lock themselves up in a room with all of Aquinas's works.

Part 4

THE RENEWAL IN PRESENT-DAY THEOLOGY

Chapter 14

SALVATION HISTORY AS THE BASIS OF THEOLOGY: *THEOLOGIA* OR *OIKONOMIA?*

1. INTRODUCTION: UNEASINESS IN THE STUDY OF THEOLOGY

Students in all the living centers of professional theological activity have for years felt a certain dissatisfaction with speculative theology and even a resentment as far this branch of theology is concerned. This may, of course, be partly the fault of the scientific method as such. No science can be entirely free from the consequences of speculation, in which the person who is engaged in the study of any speculative science is bound to some extent to stand aloof from life if life itself is to be understood. All scientific study has to take this sense of annoyance into account, and I am sure that, unless he has indeed lost all contact with life itself, there is no speculative thinker living who has not, at some time or other, wished all his books in Jericho. This is, of course, a natural reaction on the part of anyone whose spiritual life is healthy, since reflection about life is certainly not life itself, even though it comes from life and in turn serves it. A theologian, for example, who devotes hours and days to the study of prayer, is bound occasionally to recognize that the moment has come for him to stop [080] speculating about prayer and go and pray himself. Both activities are necessary in the service of mature prayer.

However, this distance which every scientist must put between himself and life cannot fully account for this disillusionment with theology; its real causes lie deeper. For if the scientific method respects the essential structure of the object of its reflection, it cannot lead to a total rupture between life and thought. When such a gulf begins to open up between the religious life or preaching, on one hand, and theology, on the other, that we become aware of a complete lack of continuity between the two, with each in effect covering a totally different field, we must then conclude that the scientific character of theology can no longer be held responsible for this division; error must somehow have crept

into either the life of the spirit or theology and an alienation from its original object must have taken place. For there is no inherent necessity for reflection about the living content of our christian life—the reality of revelation which is at the same time kerygma and the very content of revelation that we experience as the crowning glory of our existence at the level of our religious life—should produce resentment and estrangement. Scientific reflection about what affects us most intimately can hardly be anything but the extension of the same interest at the level of speculative thought. A cleavage between the two is something essentially abnormal; its cause cannot be found in the essence either of the religious life or of scientific theology itself.

The solution cannot, of course, be found in something extra—a sort of existential, affective dessert following an insufficiently nutritious theological main course. This would lead to a twofold disillusionment, since no thinking
[081] person can be satisfied by a few pious corollaries. The main dish itself must provide substantial religious food, and it must do this for the thinking, speculative mind.

On the other hand, no solution is to be found in an effort to change the scientific character of theology, because any such attempt would simply mean leaving the vantage point of theology itself. The position taken up by certain kerygmatic theologians here is well known. These theologians were painfully aware of the fact that theology was no longer a preparation for preaching, that the content of faith as elaborated in the theology of the manuals and the same material as it had to be preached by priests to human beings were two totally different worlds. Not daring to attack the existing theology, these theologians set up beside it a kerygmatic theology in which faith and theology were closely connected. A theology was promulgated in which the consideration of everything *sub ratione Christi,* in the perspective of Christ, replaced the *ratio Deitatis,* God's own being—one which was not abstract and metaphysical but concretely concerned with the history of salvation. The *determinatio fidei,* the intelligibility of dogma, was given less consideration than its *Heilsbedeutung,* its saving value and meaning for life.

This theology of the history of salvation, especially that which follows the direction taken by Oscar Cullmann, has exerted a considerable appeal in recent years.[1] This Protestant theologian was violently opposed to any form of theology which was not based on the history of salvation; for he believed it to be infected by Greek thought, since the absolute norm of christianity is historical, unlike the philosophical norm which is a transcendental datum situated outside history. "All Christian theology in its innermost essence is

[1] I am referring here to the years immediately following the Second World War.

Biblical history; on a straight line of an ordinary process in time God here [082]
reveals himself. ... the self-revealing God, that is, his Word, his Logos, once entered so completely into history that this unique entrance can be designated by dates just as can every other historical event."[2] He regarded all history, even in its secular aspect, as belonging to one single and continuous line of Christ in which the *kairoi*—that is, the relevant moments of time, precisely selected by God as moments of divine and saving intervention—are, despite their diversity, in sharp distinction from each other and in irreplaceable originality. All these saving events are orientated towards one single fundamental *kairos,* the Incarnation of Christ's saving work, from which both the past and the future become intelligible in the present.

But this renewed interest was in fact associated with a complete depreciation of speculative thought. Moreover, by an astonishing short-circuit, it identified theological speculation with scholastic theology and, what is more, with the type of scholastic theology that was currently to be found in the theological manuals. All this was influenced and given momentum by contemporary existential thought, whose supreme expression was existentialism and in which pure conceptual thought—that is, the concept dissociated from experience—was rejected. In this way the value of conceptual thought as such was brought into question, including its value in theology. One would be blind if one failed to see that this anti-speculative tendency frivolously rejected, along with the parasite of pure conceptual speculation of later scholasticism, the best in the sphere of reflection about the faith that theology has acquired throughout the course of history. It would, of course, be wrong to try to minimize this failure to appreciate the deepest purpose of speculative theology by the facile explanation that this turning from conceptual [083]
towards historical and phenomenological thought is a purely modern and transitory phenomenon. We need not, after all, be particularly well-informed historically to know that the Church stubbornly resisted the introduction of philosophical conceptualism into theology in the thirteenth century—a well known example of this is the stand made in 1228 by Pope Gregory IX against the *philosophantes in S. Doctrina.*

The fact that seven hundred years later, in the encyclical *Humani Generis,* the Church reacted (correctly) against those theologians who were seeking to exclude conceptual thought from theology would at first sight seem to imply a contradiction within the Church, or else opportunism. Neither explanation, however, is the true one; for in neither instance was there a question purely and simply of a reaction on the part of traditional theology (which, in the first half of

[2] *Christ and Time,* rev. ed., Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1964, 23f.

the thirteenth century, was still anti-speculative and, in the immediate past, speculative) against modernism—the medieval theologians, in other words, reacting against the modernism of the school of Albert and Thomas and the modern theologians reacting against the modernism of the anti-speculative, existential theologians. The problem is more complex and deeply rooted than this. What *is* indicated here is that while conceptual thought in all its forms is not pernicious, not every form of such thinking can be approved by the Church. There is, in other words, a rationalizing kind of conceptualism which attempts to enclose the inexpressible in conceptual terms, and there is, on the other hand, a kind of conceptual thought which leaves the mystery *as a mystery* and tries somehow to express it precisely as a saving mystery, with the result that these concepts of faith radiate a value for life. The Catholic Church, then, has steadily opposed every devitalising conception of the dogmatic datum, and Aquinas's
[084] crowning achievement in the sphere of theology may well be that he built the value of dogma for life on the basis of its meaning and value as truth, while at the same time remaining fully aware of the value of truth for human life.

Theology is, of course, a hazardous business, because the theologian establishes himself completely in the reality of revelation with the whole of his human spirit and thinking mind. Theology is faith itself, alive in a thinking spirit. This thinking on the part of the human spirit is never finished. The growth of human consciousness is always continuing, and something new is gained in every age. But every age without exception also has its own emotional and theoretical emphases, which result in other affective and intellectual aspects being thrust into the background. When, for example, the incarnation tendency made its appearance in the Middle Ages and Aristotle's *ratio* was placed in the centre of *Sacra Doctrina,* this led not only to a great theological synthesis, but also to the conviction that the integrity of human thought could only be protected by a religion which was capable of philosophical thought. To live at the same time from an authentic philosophy seemed to strengthen authentic religion. Religion had to be able to think clearly about itself, and philosophy seemed to be indispensable in this clarification, insofar as it was, for the believer, the synthetic principle that connected his "openness to the world" with his "openness to God." Without, philosophy, theology would, it was felt, soon become diluted to fideism and illuminism and be incapable of dealing with contemporary problems.

But this emphasis on the use of philosophy in theology is inevitably accompanied by the danger of one-sidedness, the danger, in other words, that the aspect of mystery, the basic resistance to complete intelligibility that is
[085] present in the datum of revelation, may be forgotten. The contrary, however, is also true. In stressing this aspect of mystery and the saving significance of the reality of revelation, many modern theological movements also pay insufficient

attention to the necessity of the *determinatio fidei,* the accurate definition of what enables the content of faith to be intelligibly understood within the mystery. This results in dogma becoming less clearly defined, and there is a serious threat that it may become emptied of content, or at least rootless.

The development of the synthesis between the tendency towards incarnation and the tendency towards disincarnation in theological thought will always be accompanied by painful conflicts. Harmony between nature and supernature, both at the level of human action and ascesis and at the level of theological thought, is not something that is automatically given; it is something that can only come about in a very laborious way. It is clear from the whole history of theology that reflection about the faith has in the end always followed the course of violent polemics and anathemas. In any renewal, what is authentic for christian life is always mixed up with so much that is not authentic that the new aspects which again and again emerge must in the first place be purified. Every crisis is a crisis of growth, but what is taking form, throughout the course of time, in these constantly renewed birth pangs, is the sound growth of theology, which will continue as long as "we are away from the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 6). It would not be difficult to draw a historical curve, showing how secular culture—that is, the growth of human consciousness—has again and again sounded a new theological note. The grammatical tendency of learning in the Carlovingian period resulted in the grammatical element in the sphere of theology. Later, the discovery of dialectics led to the dialectical treatment of the datum of faith. The gradual introduction of Aristotle [086] into the Western world gave rise to a speculative and philosophical theology. Positive theology came about as the result of the emergence of the historical method in secular learning. In the past, whenever a turning-point was reached, there was always a critical period of tentative searching until a balance was achieved. And this process is still going on—constantly developing human consciousness is even now always bringing new problems and new methods into prominence, and a period of crisis has to be passed through before a new balance is attained.

The study of history, then—which can provide us with a kind of sociology of theological thought—shows us that we may *a priori* expect every period to make its own *vox Dei* heard. It will also make it clear that we may also expect not only all *a priori* resistance to the new spirit of each period to be an attack against some new possibility in the sphere of theology, but also all *a priori* consent to the new notes sounded to be a possible source of danger to theology and to theological orthodoxy. The divine overtones that are present in each new sound can only be caught, the presence of the new spirit of each age can only be felt, and theology can consequently only be renewed and enriched, if we are deeply and lovingly anchored in the whole of tradition and if we at the same

time submit to the guidance of the charismatic teaching authority of the Church.

We are therefore confronted today with the problem of choice between *theologia* and *oikonomia,* with the problem, in other words, of how theology should be practised—according to abstract metaphysical principles or along the lines of concrete saving history. Ought everything to be seen *sub ratione Christi,* in the perspective of Christ, or *sub ratione Dei,* in the perspective of God? Does the conceptual approach to the mystery of faith belong, in this context, to the past, and if we do not attempt to find more precise definitions, will this
[087] therefore lead to a sounder theology? Some people are by nature speculative and others are anti-speculative, but temperament cannot be allowed to play a decisive part here. It has, of course, nothing to do with this question, even though, in certain cases, personal attitude may well have an influence on the solution to the dilemma. We must, on the contrary, let the objective structure of revelation itself speak. If theology is nothing other than the scientific status of the faith *(fides in statu scientiae),* the faith itself as alive in the human, reflective spirit, then the very structure of the reality of revelation must show us objectively whether we ought to follow a metaphysical, theocentric course or whether we should proceed along the christological lines of the history of salvation. The new note sounded by the spirit of the present age will, insofar as it is authentic and pure, be able to harmonize with the note sounded by the ancient, traditional faith only if we in our own time know how to listen correctly to the eternal symphony of revelation. I shall therefore keep two aspects of the contemporary problem above all in mind in the exposition that follows—the aspect of theology as characterized by the history of salvation and the conceptual character of theology, both within the context of the christological focus of a theology that is nonetheless essentially theocentric.

2. THE THEOLOGIA IS GIVEN TO US IN AN *OIKONOMIA*, A HISTORY OF SALVATION

1. The historical structure of revelation within the plan of salvation

Aquinas formulated his point of view in the following way: "In the most proper sense, theology provides ideas about God as the highest cause, that is, not only
[088] insofar as he is capable of being known from the created world, ... but also, insofar as he alone knows himself and as he communicates this knowledge to

others by revelation."[3] But the whole problem is, what is the mode of this revelation? Is it simply a question of a communication of knowledge of truths that are beyond our understanding, or is it primarily a question of sacramental revelation, a revelation in human and historical form? We should at the very outset be misinterpreting the data of the problem if we were to take the assertion that christianity involves revelation to mean that God has revealed certain truths that are beyond our natural understanding only as a kind of addition to an already acquired natural knowledge of God. It is, of course, certainly true that the aspect of knowing in revelation is formal. Revelation of necessity addresses a *consciousness.* But the whole problem is, how does this revelation, this process wherein the human consciousness is addressed by the living God, take place concretely? We should not forget that the dispensing and receiving of grace, the supernatural order of life, by definition involves both salvation and history. Through grace, God becomes a person for us—*Theos pros hémas,* the living God, as the Old Testament calls the God of revelation.

The God of creation is, of course, also the personal God, but he does not reveal himself in his creative concern with the world as a person for us, thus enabling us to enter into personal relationships with him. Personal relationships with God are, of their very nature, of a theologal kind, even though they are sometimes anonymously theologal. The act of creation is certainly a free act on the part of the personal God, but the true face of the living God does not emerge from his creation. Creation does, however, offer us the [089]
possibility of affirming the personal character of God as a mystery, and this recognition forms the basis of the possibility of associating with God in grace. For, if at a certain point which is not grace, our human freedom were not able to come into contact in some way with the personal God, then grace or revelation would be impossible. It is precisely because grace is *grace,* God's free gift of himself, that it implies a *vis-à-vis* with the God of grace, a subject who can accept grace as grace, or refuse it—free man in the world, who is therefore, in a certain respect, not graced, although, he is in some way already connected with God. It is, then, not the Aristotelian concept of "human nature" that makes us, as believers, distinguish between "nature" and "super-nature," but the very essence of what grace is. It is this that implies the distinction between nature and supernature, even though the existential unity of nature and supernature must be established.

Creation does allow us therefore to affirm the personal God, but this personal character is not revealed in its personal life, its innermost aspect, in

[3] See I, q. 1, a. 6: "Sacra autem doctrina propriissime determinat de Deo secundum quod est altissima causa; quia non solum quantum ad illud quod est per creaturas cognoscibile, ... sed etiam quantum ad id quod notum est sibi soli de seipso et aliis per revelationem communicatum."

creation. In other words, the free activity of creation does not itself enter into human history, although it does constitute historical man. The activity of God's grace, on the other hand, is a free intervention on God's part in the history of man. This activity is itself historical, in the sense that God himself thereby enters into personal relationships with man in the (logically) already constituted history of man. It is, moreover, only the history of salvation that gives any intimation of the true face of the trinitarian God. Therefore, whereas God does not, by definition, enter as the creator into human history, which he transcends by being interior to it, the activity of his grace and revelation is, also by definition, certainly an intervention in human history, resulting in his
[090] commencing an existential dialogue with his people as man's partner, a dialogue in which he opens up his inner life to us. The whole history of the Old and New Testaments clearly shows us that man's life with his God is a historically connected, constantly developing dialogue between God and mankind. It is, then, the history of salvation and not creation (which is, of course, the starting-point of the history of salvation) that reveals to us who God really is and his wish to be really our God, also for us men.

This revelation reached its culminating point in Christ. God entered into personal relationships with us in and through his humanity, of which the Logos is the person. A fellow man who treats us personally, then, is personally God. Jesus' human treatment of his fellow men is therefore an invitation to us to encounter God personally. Christ is the historically visible form of God's desire to confer grace and to do this in such a way that the gift of grace is essentially linked with something which is visible, a fundamental historical fact—the man Jesus. Grace therefore does not come to us directly from God's suprahistorical, transcendent will to love us, but from the man Christ Jesus. The gift and reception of grace, revelation, thus takes place within the framework of human intercommunication. Human contacts with the man Jesus, historically situated encounters become, in other words, meetings with God, because it was God's plan to redeem us only in humanity. It is at the same time the perennial, lasting character of the mediation of grace through the man Jesus that demanded, from the moment of Jesus' pneumatic glorification, the introduction of the sacramental economy of salvation, the *sacramenta separata*. Social intercommunication between men, after all, takes place via physical nature. The glorified Lord therefore continues, as a man, to be the lasting instrument of
[091] salvation, and grace continues to be conferred within the terms of human intercommunication—between men and the man Jesus.

But, because the living Lord lives in a pneumatic (that is, spirit) situation which is therefore invisible to us and we, on the other hand, still live in an unglorified earthly situation bounded by time and space, the man Jesus, who is still living even now, is able to encounter and influence us directly, but is not

able to make himself directly present to us *in propria carne.* The man Jesus still belongs to our earthly world, but at a point where this world is already glorified. As a result, then, a disproportion has arisen between us, as the unglorified world, and Christ, as the glorified world. It is only under sacramental symbols that God's eternally actual act of redemption performed in humanity can be made present to us in our earthly and historical world. Because of the perennial character of the man Jesus, as the only Mediator, "the same yesterday and today and for ever," the life of grace continues to take place, even after the closing of revelation, as a history of salvation, and our sacramental, historically situated encounter with the living Lord in the sacral sphere of Christ's Church is *the* encounter with the God of our salvation.

Throughout history, our only encounter with the *ratio Deitatis,* with God's own being, is in the man Jesus, in the saving history of the sacramental economy of salvation, in which God reveals himself personally, though in a veiled manner. This historical character of grace, or of the *agapē,* was clearly expressed by Paul in these words: "the love [*agapē*] of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 39). It is not, then, directly a metaphysical divine quality, but it is this in a history—that is, in the man Jesus, God's act of love which enters human history and from which his essential, divine goodness emerges. The [092] historical character of grace which brings about an *oikonomia* is a consequence of the fact that God, as a person taking an initiative, freely enters into dialogue with human freedom.

God's interior aspect—the *interiora Dei* of antiquity—is therefore communicated to us in a history of salvation, with the result that revelation is a saving event in which a divine reality in earthly, visible form touches the human reality. Revelation is not just the communication by speech of supra-human knowledge by the prophets and ultimately by Christ. It is more fundamentally the historical accomplishment of a divine and suprahistorical saving initiative within the structure of human history, the significance of which, however, is disclosed to us only by the Word of God. Revelation is therefore a revelation both in reality and in word— in which, however, the word is essentially related to the reality that manifests itself. The two are indissolubly united. Revelation, then, is a *mysterion* in which we, listening in faith to the Word or the kerygma, penetrate the sacramental appearance to reach the divine *mysterium.*

In revelation, then, we certainly have to do with the "First Truth," as the medieval theologians called it, but with this truth as manifested in a saving history, or as Augustine expressed it, "the history of the realisation in time of

God's providence,"[4] an economy of salvation as the sacramental appearance in time of the eternal trinitarian life of God. The trinitarian divine life—God's interior aspect—stands out against the background of a plan of salvation that takes place in time. Catholics therefore believe in earthly realities as tangible, visible and audible sacramental appearances of supernatural realities of salvation.

[093] 2. The consequences of this for the theological method

This structure of revelation has precise consequences for the method of theological reflection. Aquinas correctly laid emphasis on the fact that the "revealed God"—God as God—is the subject of theology, but that we must also remain fully aware of how and where the divinity of God is revealed to us. It is in fact revealed to us in the inner light of faith, the objective content of which is given to us in the *theophaneia* of the history of salvation. Our knowledge of God, both natural and supernatural, is always analogous —we have no explicit intuition of God, no definition of God, but "we appeal in theology to the intelligibility of God's natural or supernatural effects, as the means of our knowledge of him."[5] It is a question of a knowledge "of the one through the other"—in other words, of one reality via another reality. Just as we know God humanly from his creatures, but in such a manner that we can never relinquish this bond with creatures and hence all our ideas of God remain creatural ("utimur effectu naturae"), so too, at the level of faith and theology, we know God only from' the historical economy of salvation, and also in such a way that for our knowledge the history of salvation enters into the christian definition of God himself ("utimur effectu gratiae"). It is therefore really a question of *theo-logia,* "God-learning," but of a *theologia* that is made known to us, only in an *oikonomia,* a temporal plan of salvation.

To study a pure history of salvation is to neglect in principle the aspect of
[094] mystery proper to history, just as to study pure theology is to disregard the fact that God revealed himself as God only in a historical plan of salvation or a saving event. The theologian who appeals directly to philosophical categories in an attempt to gain a deeper insight into faith, instead of appealing to the economy of salvation and devoting his attention to what salvation history can show us and enable us to experience, is turning his back on the real *epiphania Dei;* in practice, at least, he is claiming that the created world reveals the mystery of God to us better than does the history of salvation which God has brought about precisely in order to be able to show us his true face!

[4] See *De vera religione* c. 7 (*PL* 34, 128): "Historia dispensationis temporalis divinae providentiae."
[5] See I, q. 1, a. 7. ad 1: "Utimur in S. Doctrina effectu Eius *vel* naturae *vel* gratiae, loco definitionis."

This insight into the structure of revelation shows us immediately that a theology based on the history of salvation cannot be opposed to a theology which accepts the divinity of God as the ultimate subject for consideration. Just as philosophy cannot speculate about God unless it proceeds from and remains constantly within the sphere of the created world, in which the aspect of divine transcendence is, as it were, seen, so too can theology have nothing to say about the God of salvation unless it too proceeds from and remains constantly within the sphere of the history of salvation, in which the God of redemption has revealed himself. If philosophy affirms that God is an absolute God, supratemporal, supraterrestrial and independent of the world, then theology also affirms that God is transcendent to the history of salvation. *Theologia* is therefore always based on *oikonomia,* but the two cannot be identified. We thus find the real object of the science of theology—God himself in his inner mystery—only at the level of the historically situated economy of salvation—that is, in the mystery of Christ. In theology, then, we certainly have ultimately to do with the intelligibility of God himself, but the history of salvation and therefore Christ is the only way towards this understanding of the *Deus salutaris.* And this is precisely the meaning of revelation—that they should know the Father, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.[6] [095]

It is therefore the concrete structure of revelation, as briefly outlined here, that must define the theological method. This structure shows us that we should not appeal directly to philosophy—either Aristotelian or existential (as Bultmann envisages)—in order to define the content of revelation more precisely; in other words, for speculative theology. Seen from our point of view, the history of salvation enters into the christian definition of God ("Utimur … effectu gratiae loco definitionis Dei"). The immediate basis of our analogous knowledge of God is not the created world and therefore philosophy, but the history of salvation, in which the created world is contained as an element and as a substratum of the order of salvation.

An example may help to make this clear. A deeper knowledge of the affirmation that God is Father and Son and Spirit presupposes of course the human intelligibility of natural fatherhood and sonship, but by referring to the economy of salvation itself, to the reality which explicitates the mystery of God—the reality of the appearance of Christ as the medium through which the divine realities are revealed. The "visible mission of the Son" is the theologian's real field of activity, the sphere in which he can more precisely define the deeper meaning of the divine Sonship. Why, then, look immediately in the philosophical world of creatures, if God reveals his true face in the history of

[6] See John xvii. 3.

salvation? I would almost say, why spend so much time scrutinising the *vestigium,* when the history of salvation can provide us with a clear *imago* of God himself which gives us a far more direct view of the interior world of God?
[096] It is not mere chance that the man Jesus is true God, yet was truly born as man (who was God). He was born, then, but still God—Son and God, and therefore God's Son.

This fact of the saving economy can provide us with a purer insight into the divine Sonship, and do this far better than a conceptual analysis of the human concept of "procreation." It is not as if the second Person is the Son of God only because of the economy of salvation. The very reverse is true—it is because he is the Son in the bosom of the Trinity that he, and not the first or the third Person, was born as man, so that his birth in time is for us the *locus theologicus,* the theological datum from which we can more precisely define the divine Sonship. This was furthermore the patristic method of proceeding, and it also still applies to the whole of theology, even to the *de Deo Uno,* or the "treatise on God." Why, then, appeal almost exclusively to the creatural perfections in order to define God's being more accurately, with the result that the theological treatise on God becomes a kind of reprint of the theodicy? "Do not even the Gentiles do the same?" God, after all, revealed his true face in the history of salvation and above all in Christ. How splendid and illuminating a treatise the *de Deo Uno* could be, if it were a theological reflection on the experiences of the people of Israel with their God in the history of salvation, which provides the clearest intimation of God's innermost being! The whole purpose of the history of salvation is to be an *epiphaneia* of God. The creatural perfections could then be included in this revelation, and thus be able to render valuable services.

The neglect of this view has been felt by those modern thinkers who are aware of the need for religious authenticity to be an estrangement from faith, because they feel, even though they are perhaps not yet able to formulate it
[097] clearly, that it is evident that the knowledge of what God really is and the understanding of what he really intends to be for us should be sought in revelation itself. We know that God is good from his creation, but the divine mode of this goodness emerges only from the history of salvation. "For God so loved the world," even though we cannot grasp the content of this divine mode in appropriate concepts. But, when this goodness takes on the mode of the sacrifice of the Cross; when we see this goodness actively at work in the history of the stiff-necked Jews; then the light of the christian goodness of our God dawns on us. If, however, we fail to take the history of salvation into account in our consideration of God, then we shall be turning our backs on the very reality in which God himself reveals and makes explicit the *interiora Dei,* his personal mystery, and looking for creatural analogies. And these are, after all, only a distant reflection of what is revealed to us in a more splendid and a more

appropriate manner about God's holiness, justice, goodness, long-suffering and patience in the history of salvation.

When Aquinas spoke about "Christ who, as man, is for us the way leading to God" (I, q. 2, Prol.), he was at the same time stating, *ipso facto,* the theological method, since there can be no cleavage between life and reflection about the content of that life. This is an inevitable consequence of the objective character of our human knowledge. The manner of thinking may vary, but the structure of the content of faith remains the same.

We may therefore conclude that theology is essentially christological as to its method—in other words, that it has a basis of salvation history—but that it is theocentric and trinitarian so far as its proper object is concerned—a reflection about God who addresses us in an *oikonomia* or plan of salvation and whose speaking we hear only in the history of salvation. In other words, the way that leads to the inner mystery of God is the mystery of Christ, the history of [098] salvation, which was commenced in the history of man, more sharply defined in the Old Covenant and completed in the historical Christ, and is encountered sacramentally and kerygmatically by us in and through the mystery of the Church. The economy of salvation must therefore always be the nursery bed of theology.

In this way, we have caught the divine note that sounds in certain contemporary movements, but we have at the same time made it harmonise with the older and well-known theocentric notes that no true theologian would ever neglect. In the history of salvation that cuts across human history, we always hear the *living* God, our God, the God of our salvation, God who, as God, is our salvation— "Deus qui sub ratione Deitatis est salus nostra." Revelation is an *appearing-making known* or a *making-known appearance* of a way of salvation, although not in an anthropocentric sense, since it is precisely in this "way of salvation" that God's name is revealed and glorified. That is why revelation is the hallowing or glorification of God's name in and through the faithful acceptance of this "way to salvation."

3. THE THEOLOGY OF SALVATION HISTORY AND THEOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

This brings us to the second question—is conceptual thinking and the appeal to philosophy excluded from theology by the foregoing affirmation?

Concretely, revelation is a history of salvation culminating in the incarnation of Christ and the mysteries of his life— God became personally a man and experienced his divine life in a human way. Now, in the life of a man, the human consciousness is the centre of the whole of his human activity. Christ's human self-consciousness is the consciousness of his own divinity—the [099] incarnation of the divine consciousness in human psychology. The immediate

source of what Jesus communicated to us in Holy Scripture is his human consciousness as illumined by his divine consciousness. In the one person of the God-man, then, divine knowledge is experienced in human consciousness and is therefore expressed in concepts, images and words which are derived from our world of human experience. The relationship between the concepts of faith and the reality of salvation eludes us—this relationship is, for us, a mystery. That these human concepts, which reveal the divine, do, however, in truth correspond to the divine reality of revelation is guaranteed by the mystery of Christ's appearance. As "totus in suis, totus in nostris," he was able to express, in a personal manner, the divine reality in suitable human images and concepts.

The economy of salvation, enacted in time and completed in the man Jesus, thus shows from the very beginning the direction in which the images and concepts of faith will move as expressions of man's contact with the saving reality itself. "The act of faith does not terminate in the concepts of faith, but in reality"[7]—the reality of salvation is attained in and through the concepts of faith by virtue of the light of faith as God's speaking inwardly and supernaturally to us. In this way, the concepts of faith are the reality of salvation itself, but, in that case, as known in faith by us men. The conceptual form to some extent expresses an implicit grasping in faith of the saving reality. The human process of bringing to awareness is simply not possible without some degree of conceptuality. Knowledge that is never expressed and therefore non-conceptual is not human consciousness, but an absence of consciousness—
[100] this is not pure theory, but a fact of human experience. Concepts belong essentially to the human process of bringing to awareness, but they can only grasp this saving reality insofar as they express the implicit grasp of the reality which is guaranteed by the "light of faith."

This expression in concepts is therefore the act by means of which the activity of knowing takes possession of a definite content of knowledge and appropriates it. The intimate "union of the spirit with God," to which Aquinas referred and which is given in and through the light of faith as the supernatural essence of faith, is thus connected with the concepts of faith, and these are included in the christian consciousness. The inner light of faith or the *locutio interna* is attuned, and indeed exclusively attuned, to what the *locutio externa* or the history of salvation provides for us through the mediation of the Church, so to speak, from outside, and this always includes, as such, the use of concepts. The *determinatio fidei,* or our consciousness of definite contents of faith, is, as Aquinas stressed again and again, especially in his commentary on the *Sentences,* "from what is heard"—*fides ex auditu.* The real and the notional

[7] See II-II, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2: "Actus credentis non terminatur ad enuntiabile, sed ad rem."

intellectual dimension of our faith are two inseparable aspects of our knowledge of the supernatural contents of faith. In this way, there is a definite element of conscious appropriation, of clarity and conceptuality, in the mystery of salvation as accepted by us in faith, and this element is expressed precisely in the concept of faith—in the *enuntiabile.* "Non enim posset homo assentire credendo aliquibus propositis, nisi ea aliqualiter intelligeret"[8]—there is no consent in faith without some understanding of faith. The concepts of faith thus point to the aspect of intelligibility that the subject can discover in the otherwise unfathomable mystery. Experience and concept, the light of faith and "faith [101] from what is heard"—these always belong together.

The content of faith is therefore not a concept, but the God of salvation himself, adhered to in faith, really attained, not, it is true, grasped in concepts, but certainly aimed at in concepts. These concepts are the content of faith itself in its aspect of expression that is guaranteed by revelation.

It is here that certain kerygmatic theologians fall into error —by making a division between the definition of the content of faith and the saving value of this content, and by believing that the first should be neglected in favor of the second. We can, however, not reach the saving value of dogma unless we come to it in and through the saving truth of the objective reality of revelation, which must, as explicitly known, inevitably also be approached by concepts. Any dissociation of the *determinatio* or the content of truth from dogma as saving value will automatically result in pseudo-mysticism, pragmatism and subjectivism. The more purely, however, the significance of the content of revelation, as grasped intellectually in faith, is expressed in theological terms, the clearer and more meaningful will be the light that is thrown on the saving relevance of dogma. The intelligibility of dogma itself, the *credibile sub ratione veri,* must be the real point of light. The fact that this intelligibility can be expressed only in concepts is due to our human condition, which can become conscious of reality only by means of concepts. It is the fate of every science that aims at insight to make strict and severe demands on the human mind, and the science of theology is no exception. But anyone who thus possesses the content of faith in a scientific manner can penetrate so deeply to the heart of the mystery that he can fundamentally master the infinitely varied situations even outside the sphere of scientific theology—for example, in preaching— [102] assuming, of course, that he has living contact with, and experience of, man as a *concrete* reality. He can do this precisely because his insight into the intelligibility of faith enables him to deal freely with dogma within the strict limits of orthodoxy. An autonomous kerygmatic theology, on the other hand,

[8] II-II, q. 8, a. 8, ad 2.

cut off from precise scientific definition, is, through lack of a precise *determinatio fidei,* from the very beginning limited in its varied manipulation of dogmatic preaching.

But speculative theology must also not lose sight of the distinctive nature of our conceptual knowledge of faith, and in this the historical Thomas differs quite radically from later Thomist thought, which was influenced by Scotism. The concepts of faith have a *content that orientates* us positively towards the reality of salvation—they contain an objective reference as knowledge, but they do not really grasp the reality in concepts. For example, the Fatherhood of the first Person is really situated in the objective perspective of our *human concept* "father," but we do not grasp conceptually the manner in which God's fatherhood is realized—all that we have as a conceptual content is the concept of human fatherhood. The fatherhood of God is certainly situated in the objective perspective of this human fatherhood, but we cannot locate it any more precisely within this perspective. We cannot measure the analogy. The concepts of faith are surrounded by human concepts which are, however, open to the mystery. The intellectual value of our concepts of faith is to be found in a projective act of knowing, through which we reach out in faith to God, without, however, grasping him conceptually, although we know that he is objectively to be found in the extension of, for example, our human concepts of father and son. In fact, we do not really apply the concept itself to God—the conceptual
[103] content rather tends towards God. God is therefore really Father and Son, and it is not simply that we can only represent him best in this way. We do not simply pretend that God is Father—he is Father in himself. But we do not apply the conceptual content of fatherhood to God—this only gives us an objective orientation. Speculative theology is therefore not in a position to conceptualise the mystery, but it can preserve the objective perspective of the mystery from misconceptions.

That is why, even in theology which is oriented towards the history of salvation, metaphysics can and must have an irreplaceable function to perform, although this is bound to be subordinate.

Philosophy seeks the intelligibility of the datum of experience, and in this *sense* it is not dethroned by faith and theology. Revelation itself does not provide us with any supra-metaphysical truths, but only with exploitations along the lines of salvation history. As a consequence, metaphysics always has some contribution to make in any case in which we have to do with the intelligibility of reality, even when it is a saving reality. Although, in metaphysics God is not considered as God, but only as fundamental being, the divine being is nonetheless also a being and as such intelligible. It is certainly not a question of the mystery of God being situated at a deeper level than the mystery of being. It is one and the same mystery, reached metaphysically in

and through the created world and theologically in and through the economy of salvation. Both views of God are, complementary to and throw light on each other. The existential unity between the order of creation and the order of salvation is therefore the basis for the application of philosophy in theology. In this sense, Pascal's distinction between the "God of the philosophers" and the "God of the history of salvation" is incorrect. Pure philosophy is concerned with the christian God, with the God of salvation, insofar as he is attainable by [104] means of natural human thought. But metaphysics does not come to God in himself precisely in this way, that is to say, it does not reach God precisely in his personal, dialogic relationship with man—it reaches in the creature *only* and *precisely* what must be assumed as a possibility for this personal dialogue if man is to be able to engage meaningfully in this dialogue. And it is precisely in this aspect that metaphysical insights can be put to the service of theological reflection about the manifestation of God in the history of salvation.

It is therefore clear that concepts, divorced from experience, are incapable of grasping reality and that a purely conceptual theology inevitably loses sight of its central point—that is, it becomes remote from the reality of revelation and eventually causes a cleavage between faith and theology. On the other hand, however, an anti-speculative attitude is also bound to lead to alienation from the specific content of the data of revelation, since theology is undoubtedly much more than history—it is salvation history. It is, then, basically knowledge of historical saving events which are only the form in which the mystery of the saving will of the living God is made apparent. If we therefore maintain that the intelligibility of the living God, the *credibile ut intelligibile,* is the ultimate aim of theological reflection, then this also means that theology, however deeply embedded it may be in the history of salvation, will always result in speculative theology. If it does not, the human spirit, which is by nature attuned to intuitive knowledge, to a knowledge which strives to grasp being and is, in this sense, quidditative, will always be left dissatisfied. In this case, the dissatisfaction with theology that is felt today because of the continuing lack of a basis of salvation history would simply be replaced by another form of dissatisfaction —one already formulated by Thomas: "We must investigate the root of all truth ... [105] establish the basis of this truth; otherwise ... we may know that something is as it is, but we shall have no real understanding and the spirit will remain, as it were, empty."[9] Both Augustine and Thomas even defined the act of faith as a restless and searching reflection based on firm consent: "cum assensione cogitare." Every reality, and *a fortiori* the divine reality of salvation, is, because

[9] *Quodl.* 4, q. 9, a. 3: "Debemus investigare… veritatis radicem,…scire quomodo sit verum quod dicitur; alioquin…certificabitur quidem quod ita est, sed nihil scientiae vel intellectus acquiret et vacuus abscedit."

of the transcendental character of the content of being, meaningful for living human thought and must be integrated in human life. Faith itself includes this aspect of reflection in inception, an aspect that, in theology, is only extended at the scientific level.

"I long to understand something of thy truth, my God, the truth that my heart believes and loves." [10] And we can say, together with Augustine, "Whoever believes, thinks [about his believing], and believing, reflects and reflecting, believes ... A faith that is not thought about is not faith." [11]

[10] Anselm, *Proslogion,* Prooem.
[11] *De praedestinatione sanctorum* c. 5 (PL 44, 963).

Chapter 15

THE NEW TRENDS IN PRESENT-DAY DOGMATIC THEOLOGY

It is not my intention to provide an outline of what is happening today in dogmatic theology. I think it is preferable to indicate the new emotional and mental attitudes which are developing in this area. It should become clear from this sketch that the faith of thoughtful christians—and hence dogmatic theology—living in the midst of an intellectual quickening and renewal, has undergone clarification. The meeting between new experiences, clarified by reflection, and the older insights into the faith has not only produced new problems in theology but has at the same time led to a fresh theological synthesis. For the new problems and insights have not simply been added onto the earlier theological findings in an external way, like an appendix. These older theological gains are themselves renewed by the modern problems and insights. For this reason, we are bound to say that not one single theological "treatise" or one part of such a treatise is excluded from the present-day theological renewal. (This is precisely why it is not possible to summarize the new acquisitions in dogmatic theology.) The truth contained in the older insights has, moreover, not been proved untrue in this process. It has rather survived in a higher entity. But in this new theological whole, the traditional [107] insights have been purified and given new shades of meaning and even, here and there, basically corrected.

This process has taken place frequently throughout the history of the Church. It was strikingly evident, for example, in Aquinas's time. The older insights of the official theology of the Church that were current at that period—that is, Augustinian theology—were brought to life in a completely new way by Aquinas, who not only had a distinct feeling for the new Aristotelian, Arabian and Jewish philosophy that was coming to light in those days, but also went back to ancient scriptural and patristic sources. The elements of truth that had been acquired in the traditional theology were not

sacrificed by Aquinas, but were rather incorporated in his synthesis as a result of a completely new presentation of theological problems. Very much the same thing is happening today. A complete renewal of dogmatic theology has been brought about in the thinking Church by the new perspectives opened up by modern thought, by a return to original sources, and especially to scriptural sources, and also by Catholic contact with Anglican, Protestant and Orthodox theology.

This gradual growth in knowledge of the faith is a consequence of the essentially historical nature of our existence. New aspects of the truth come to light only when the time is ripe for them; in other words, when man is able to take up that particular position from which a particular *aspectus* of the reality that has so far not been seen becomes apparent to him. What is new in present-day theology should not therefore make us bewildered or suspicious. It is not a different theology that confronts us today, but the ancient theology of the Church that has come to possess the reality of the faith more firmly. It is, in
[108] essence at least, not purely a phenomenon of fashion. This renewal of theology is above all an opportunity for grace. At the same time, however, it can, now as at all times, also lead to the possibility of error. The harmony between "nature" and "supernature" is not, so to speak, automatically brought about in the incarnation of faith which has to be continuously renewed in human thought any more than it is automatically brought about in practical, active life. By definition this harmony can only be reached in detachment and constant self-criticism.

If the development of dogma and of theology is traced, it will be seen that one of the main factors in this growth, apart from man's constant return to the original sources in Scripture and christian practice, is his vital awareness of the confrontation between the faith and new historical forces. Another principal factor, closely related to this, is the new trends of thought and opinion arising from human experience, which is constantly finding fresh expression, particularly in the literature and philosophy of an age.

We should not, however, forget, in connection with dogmatic development, that our faith in God never utters the first word in theological reflection. Religion and faith are a response—a reply—and therefore the second word. The first word is spoken by God himself. The whole basis of our concrete religion is revelation, and revelation is that extremely personal divine gesture through which the living God as it were steps outside himself and approaches us with the offer of his love—the offer of "communion with him," of a love which is fulfilled only when we return it. It is through this personal relationship with God—a son's relationship with the Father, the relationship of a son who, in Christ, grows to the full stature of a mature man—that we come to live in the grace that makes us holy. Our fumbling expression of this situation is that we

have sanctifying grace. In reality, it is far more than this—we are taken up into a [109]
living communion with God, we live, have our being, and move in the rhythm of the divine life. We dwell in God, as in our own house. Quite individual, personal relationships exist between God and ourselves.[1] Drawn by this divine offer of love, which we can only accept in faith, and hoping and trusting that this initiative in love will, in the future, take personal care of our lives, we too, by virtue of the divine love that is given to us in Christ in the boundless infusion of his Holy Spirit, step outside ourselves into this communion of love.

In its essence, then, the content of faith, or revelation, is an invitation to salvation made by God to living mankind, a giving of himself on God's part. The word of revelation is directed, through the medium of the history of salvation, to the whole of mankind, and inwardly to the heart of every man. It is also addressed to us. What is heard must therefore always be brought into close association with the contemporary spiritual situation of the men who here and now hear God's Word. For this reason, the exegete has to attempt to establish how the Word of God was spoken to and heard by Israel, the apostles and the early Church. The dogmatic theologian, on the other hand, tries to establish how the same Word—heard by Israel and the apostolic Church and nonetheless also directly addressed to us, men of the twentieth century, in and through the actual grace of faith—should be heard in its pure form by us now. How God [110]
spoke to Israel and how he spoke, in Christ, to the early Church, and how Israel and the early Church understood and experienced this Word must, of course, already have been determined before this work is undertaken. There can, therefore, be no dogmatic theology without exegesis and biblical theology. The hearing of the word of God by Israel and the apostolic Church forms part of the constitutive phase of revelation and is therefore *ephapax,* a unique and unrepeatable event, which will always act as a norm to the obedient listening of the post-apostolic Church. But, on the other hand, although revelation continues to be closed, God still speaks to us here and now in and through the "light of faith." This is indeed so true that the contemporary mode of our listening to God's word does to some extent come within revelation, as is clearly disclosed in any so-called new definition of dogma. When, for example, the Council of Chalcedon expressed the saving reality that is Christ in the affirmation "two natures, one person," it heard the same in this affirmation that

[1] The *religious* relationship between God and man on the basis of sanctifying grace can therefore not be expressed in terms of relationships of "cause and effect." It transcends such relationships. On the other hand, however, this living communion with God does not fall outside God's universal causality, because even God's action "outside himself" is divine—it is an absolute activity and thus "creates from nothing." This explains the necessity of the *gratia creata,* created grace, as an ontological implication of the reciprocity in grace between God and ourselves. The mere "phenomenology" of the "encounter" cannot account for this.

the apostles had heard from their experience of the reality of Christ, and yet the manner of appropriating this same Word of God is different. This appropriation, however, not only belongs to the dogma, it is the dogma itself.

However absolute and unchangeable the saving value may be, it nonetheless shares, as something that is known by us in faith, in those characteristics which are distinctively human—in the imperfection, the relativity and the growth or historical nature of every human possession of truth. We must always distinguish, in the implicit totality of faith, between the reality of salvation and our consciousness of this reality in explicit faith at any given moment. It is a consequence of our physical nature and our situation in this world, without which the life of faith is not possible, that our awareness of
[111] faith is always a vision of the reality of salvation, seen in a certain perspective. Every human affirmation of faith is therefore open to growth and to amplification from the implicit totality of faith. We are never able to make any definitive and allround statements concerning faith. Our faith, which is manifested in an earthly and human form, provides us, from a finite, limited and historical standpoint, with a view in perspective of the absolute reality of salvation which we, because of our very nature, never have in our power—not even in the beatific vision of God. The saving value does not change. Even our concepts of faith do not change. What does change is the perspective within which we view the saving reality via our concepts (which naturally include images). This perspective varies throughout the course of history and from person to person, thus bringing about the *growth* of our possession of the truth or of our personal faith and of our concepts of faith. It is via diverse and constantly changing perspectives that we come ever closer to a better understanding of the absolute reality of salvation. It is sufficiently clear from our thorough *consciousness* of the fact that we always view the saving reality in a changing perspective that we do certainly encounter it in its absolute character, since this means that we at the same time rise above the perspective and transcend the relative in our vision.

This, of course, emerges clearly from Scripture itself. It is quite possible and permissible for us to speak—correctly—of a synoptic, a Johannine and a Pauline image of Christ. We are unmistakably faced with three very divergent views, which do, however, come into contact "somewhere" with each other and are complementary to each other. To make an absolute of, for example, the synoptic perspective would eventually lead to Nestorianism, whereas to give
[112] an absolute value to the Johannine vision would, on the other hand, lead to a denial of the full consequences of the true and developing manhood of Jesus. This is precisely why every form of conceptualism—and by this I mean, in this context, the giving of an absolute value to one vision of Christ expressed in concepts—is, by definition, the most extreme relativism, because it makes

absolute one special perspectivist view of the absolute and thereby excludes any complementary vision. This relativism is all the more dangerous because it presents itself under the cloak of synoptic or Johannine orthodoxy.

Every period of history, then, is characterised by its own special points of view. Man is made most clearly aware of these new points of view in philosophy (and, in a distinctive way, in literature). That is why, throughout the history of the Church, every new development in theological thought can be seen to have been closely associated with a development in universal human thinking. In this way, philosophy especially has continued to present theology with one chance after another of deepening its insight into the reality of revelation. But, although contemporary philosophy does compel the christian thinker to trace the connection between the word of God and the spiritual situation of his time, it is at the same time clear that errors in this new philosophical thought also cause frequent conscious or unconscious "heresies".

Here I propose to discuss only a few of the most striking features of this new human awareness and to consider its repercussions on dogmatic theology. In this, I shall not aim at providing a complete picture and shall deliberately even omit certain problems because a discussion of these would require a separate exposition. Among such problems are those which really belong to a general "introduction" to theology—questions, for example, of "tradition," "religious projection," "demythologisation" and so on.

1. THE APPEAL TO HUMAN EXISTENTIAL EXPERIENCE [113]

Theology is the faith of the thinking man—it is a reflection about faith. For this reason, every believer is virtually a "theologian"—as a man, he thinks about his being a believer. In many cases, this is not done methodically, but happens spontaneously at certain occasions, especially as a result of practical experiences of life. But this reflection can also take place systematically, methodically and scientifically, in which case we speak of theology as a science, although it is a science of a very special kind. Not every man is called to practice this science, just as not every man is called to be a doctor, although every man is indeed called to have some knowledge of the practical care of his health. The scientific examination of human experience employs a different method of working from the spontaneous examination. On the other hand, the call to practice the science of theology is by no means confined exclusively to priests. Indeed, it is even questionable whether the ordinary priest in the parish, engaged in pastoral work, is really called to practice theology *as a science*. It is, of course, true that he is bound to study the totality of faith in a more methodical and systematic way, but training for the priesthood is, in fact, not an education for the practice of theology as a science. This is always a personal vocation,

which is addressed to laymen as well as to priests. It is an established fact that in the first centuries of the Church's history the science of theology was to a very great extent in the hands of laymen and of bishops, and only exceptionally in the hands of priests. But even if theology is regarded as a scientific reflection about faith, this specialised activity cannot be separated from the believing
[114] community. In a certain sense, we may say that theology as a science is a reflection deriving from the entire community of believers and expressed through the mouths of the theologians. This theology issues from faith and flows back towards faith. It serves as a mediator between the simple faith which is largely "anonymous," with its spontaneous expression, and the faith which is more explicit and thus stronger and more personal.

Faith and reflection about faith are, however, two completely different orientations of the spirit. Although faith is an "existential act," theology as a science is not. As reflection, theology is an act which, *as such,* stands outside man's affective and practical attitude towards the reality of faith. Although it does come within the sphere of living faith, it nonetheless preserves a certain "distance" from life, partly so as to stress the orientation of religious practice towards reality. "Life" and "thinking about life" do constitute a single whole, because human life is not simply lived but is of its very nature a life that man himself must direct; yet there is a difference between the two within this one totality of life. The point of rest at which the searching mind takes a certain distance from life, precisely in order to fathom its meaning and to be able ultimately to give it a true direction, does not correspond exactly with lived life.

It is from this difference between life and reflection about life, within the distinctive character of the human sphere of life—man's life is, of its very nature, a life which thinks about itself—that one of the basic attitudes of theology as a science becomes clear. This is that the science of theology never separates the saving value from the value as truth. It is precisely in the saving truth that the theologian discovers the saving value of revelation for man. It is only if it is directed towards that—that is, if it recognizes the value of *truth* itself for life—that theology is able to nourish the life of faith. Theology is concerned
[115] with the reality of faith, which is meaningful for man precisely in its absolute character. This act of theological reflection does, it is true, come from life and it does serve life, but as such it is a reflection about life. It is here, then, that the real testimony is to be found. This testimony is not the same as that of preaching or the kerygma, but it has its own special place in the fullness of the life of the Church and ultimately serves the Church's subsequent preaching by its distinctly scientific character.

1. Theology is a reflection about the mystery of faith and, in the light of this mystery, about problems of life in this world. This *mystery*—the revelation in reality itself, with which we come personally into contact through the "light of

faith"—is clarified by the prophetic word (and ultimately by the prophetic office of the Church) in the *concepts* of faith, the expression of which—dogma—is, so to speak, the exponent. The reality of salvation, the concepts and images of faith and their expression constitute one single, undivided whole.

An important insight in this connection is that this divine mystery, the very centre of theological speculation, is not a supra-mystery with regard to the mystery which man's spontaneous or reflective and philosophical thought encounters. We are, in faith, not concerned with an "analogy in the second power." The mystery of faith is rather a disclosure of the same divine mystery which shows itself at the end of human thought. The consequence of this is that the revelation of this mystery takes place in and through saving facts—it is not a revelation, as it were, of a new kind of metaphysics, a kind of supra-metaphysics. The life of grace implies that, at a point which is not yet grace, man already has a certain contact with the divine mystery. The result of this, as far as man situated in history is concerned, is that when God, in his grace, wishes to come into personal contact with man, this contact, or [116] revelation, itself makes history. Revelation is accomplished in a history of salvation; that is, in the history of mankind which God confronts not only as the Creator who transcends everything by being interior to it but also as a partner in life who enters human history by drawing near to meet man, and who thereby really makes this history into saving history, while leaving its strictly historical character intact.

Man's experience of the life of grace on earth is therefore existentially quite different from his experience of glorification in heaven. The believer is related to God, on the one hand, by the grace of faith, hope and love, through which he possesses a supernatural, personal orientation towards God; but, on the other hand, he is characterized in all his living actions as well as in his faith, hope and love by his physical nature within this world. It is only when the beatific vision is made incarnate in our pneumatic physical nature; it is only when we are made entitatively supernatural even in our physical nature, that we can speak of a real experience of God, for it is only then that we are completely the subjects of a supernatural experience of reality.

Here on earth, a personal contact with the living God that is already present in faith can certainly refashion our deepest mode of being, our actions and our insights, but this mode of being, this attitude to life and these insights can only be realized in the natural form of our humanity. That is why revelation does not come to us in heavenly concepts and words, but in concepts and words, images, actions and signs that are rooted in our natural existential experience. When we name God, to whom we are personally oriented only in faith, we give him names which are derived from our experiences here on earth, and which are

[117] ultimately derived from Christ's consciousness of himself, that he expressed in words, concepts and images derived from his own human existential experience. The distinctive character of man's natural existential experience is therefore fully maintained, but it is at the same time incorporated in a supernatural orientation towards God, which imparts to all our actions a content that cannot always be expressed explicitly, but that certainly breaks through in christian life and experience. "Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you will also appear with him in glory" (Col. iii. 3-4).

This not only lays stress on the essentially eschatological orientation of our life of grace on earth. It also makes it quite clear that the supernatural quality of this life is still concealed. The full and explicit experience of the supernatural quality of our life takes place only in the beatific vision of God, embodied in our pneumatic physical nature. Here on earth we live, in the fullest sense of the word, in and from the mystery. Any theology which disregards this is only turning the whole of man's life of grace on earth upside down, forgetting that here on earth our life is not yet revealed. The life of grace appears only in the form of natural physical being within this world, with all its consequences.

2. This earthly structure of our personal communion with God determines the method employed by dogmatic theology. The content of faith, which is, in its distinctive quality, really inexpressible here on earth, is expressed in concepts which are rooted in a certain experience—in our experience of the history of salvation. But it follows from what I have already said that there is, parallel to and within our personal but veiled involvement with the reality of divine revelation (thanks to the grace of the light of faith), a reference in our so-called concepts of faith to our natural existential experience, and thus to the
[118] natural light that is contained in this experience and makes it meaningful, the source of many insights which, in union with our experience of faith, express something of the reality of salvation.

If, for example, the christian concept of divine providence is not an empty word for us, it presupposes a twofold experience and reflection about these experiences. First of all, it assumes that we have had experience, in our lives, of the watchful care of a loving being—a father, mother or friend. Without this worldly experience of providence, the word and concept "providence," as applied to God would have no meaning for us. It is only on the basis of this content and meaning that we can, without being able to form any real idea of it, really aim at God's providence. Secondly, it assumes that man can by his natural powers arrive at some idea of God. Without this basis of a natural reaching out to the Absolute—of whom we cannot take possession but who, on the contrary, demands our complete surrender to him—the christian faith would be devoid of intelligibility and the projection of our worldly idea of

providence onto God would have no objective value. It would be a purely "religious projection," made not from an objective dynamism of the reality, but by a subjective projection without any *definite* direction and without content and meaning—in a word, empty.

This single example should show how closely speculative theology must seek to associate itself with human existential experience. The human idea of providence, for example, points to an experience which belongs to the order of fellowship; it is a specific form of intersubjectivity, of mutual presence and dialogue. From this concrete experience, we then analyze the constitutive elements of this worldly providence in the order of a phenomenology of encounter, and from this we can open a certain perspective onto divine providence. This openness, this perspective whose horizon is lost to our view, [119] arouses a certain longing and expectation in us. It points to a further possibility—that of a free, personal God. Then we see how this possibility, which was prepared in the Old Testament, was realized in the man Jesus. We see how God's concrete providence and care is really present in Christ, how it is *shown, realized* and in addition *resolved* in Christ. In this way, we keep in constant touch, in theological reflection, with the concrete reality; that is, with human existential experience and with the history of salvation, in which the living God allowed Israel and the man Jesus, and still allows his Church, meaningfully and actively to experience the reality of salvation. We do not by reflection lose contact with reality and with experience—we do not even lose touch with personal experience of life, since God extends his personal gesture of salvation to the history of every human being.

In my opinion, then, one of the most striking characteristics of the new theology is that a conceptual element is essentially present in human thought, but that human thought is not nourished by concepts, but by experience—by varying perceptive contacts with the reality of salvation. Later scholastic theology especially, and in particular the theology of the Enlightenment, of which our present-day theological manuals are the inheritance, tended to regard experience simply as a point of departure providing concepts, in the view that all further thought could take place purely conceptually. The phenomenological, existentialist tendency of recent dogmatic reflection is, on the other hand, in striking contrast to the "essentialist" theology of the past.

It is, however, true to say that, in certain theological movements, those who follow this modern tendency do go to extremes by setting their face firmly against all conceptuality and practicing a literary and phenomenological kind of theology which really has nothing in common with theology proper. These [120] modern theologians seem to forget that any phenomenological elucidation of faith will be quite inadequate if it fails to penetrate to the metaphysical implications of the life of faith and if it neglects the distinctively divine manner

of, for example, the reciprocal relationship between God and man. Furthermore, they also seem to forget, in fact, though not in theory, that conceptual theological knowledge is really the expression *par excellence* in this world of the content of man's experience of faith.

The playing with concepts which characterized later scholasticism has nowadays frequently been replaced by a kind of literary playing with phenomenological ideas on the part of those theologians who claim that they are orientated towards phenomenology. And this tendency constantly brings the authentic theological renewal into disrepute. Confronted with such phenomenological attempts to reach an understanding of the dogma of the Transubstantiation, for example, we are forced to admit that these studies provide an excellent *introduction* to the theology of the Transubstantiation. But they do not come anywhere near the real problem of the dogma. In the belief that they are interpreting the dogma in a modern theological way, all that these theologians have in fact succeeded in doing is unwittingly to coat the dogma with phenomenology. In reacting—rightly—against a form of metaphysics that was cosmologically orientated, their mistake has been to abandon metaphysics entirely in their phenomenological analyses and to forget that it is possible to renew metaphysics on an anthropological basis. On the other hand, scholastic reactions to phenomenological analyses of this kind manifest such a physical approach and such a lack of understanding of phenomenology that even these speculations about the Transubstantiation fail to satisfy us and can therefore only save it verbally.

[121] I am of the opinion that a state of balance has by no means as yet been achieved in this eager recourse to phenomenological analyses, however necessary these may be in theological renewal. It is here, I believe, that the critical point of the new theology can be found—the point at which theology will either go on to make a new, authentic flight or else be fatally grounded in a complete emptying of content of the Catholic faith. This danger is, in my view, very real today. Its chief exponent is H. Duméry, despite the many splendid pages that he has been able to offer us.

In the foregoing remarks, then, I have attempted, by assuming what is to follow, to show in a few words the inevitably earthly form of theological thought. This form contains the reason for the continuous renewal of theology. An appeal to the constantly growing elucidation of human existential experience is a matter of life or death for genuine theology.

2. THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL IDEA OF INCARNATION: GREATER AWARENESS OF THE "HUMAN CONDITION"

1. Recognition of the distinctive character of the "human condition": its good influence on dogmatic theology

Probably the most important advance made by the philosophy of modern phenomenology is its recognition of the distinctive character of the "human condition" and its resolute abandonment of physicism, according to, which man, like the things of nature, was seen as something that is "determined by nature." The distinctive, anthropological character of man, whose mode of being and mode of being one is to be found in an essential correlation between the spirit which communicates itself to the body and the physical nature which [122] participates in this spirit, is nowadays becoming increasingly clear. This insight could be called the affirmation of man's essential incarnation, in which man is also seen as a fundamental freedom, and as a "possibility" *(Wesen der Möglichkeit)*. For the first time in history since the Hellenistic period, we are confronted by a complete break with the dualist conception of man. A synthesis between the consistent acceptance of personalism and the recognition of the essential incarnation of the human person is gradually coming about. This has enabled us to see more clearly than in the past that the specifically human character of man is not something that is given, a datum, but a task, something that has to be realized (and therefore also something that can be neglected!). But it has also enabled us to see, on the one hand, that man is spiritual even in his physical nature and, on the other, that all his activities, even his most exalted spiritual and religious actions, always bear the stamp of his earthly physical nature. It is only in this world that man comes to himself. He impresses the things that surround him with the stamp of his humanity and it is only in this way that he can live as a man, even insofar as he is religious. All this places greater emphasis both on human freedom and on the situational character of this freedom and at the same time enables us to gain a more subtle insight into the essential ambiguity of everything that is human.

The basic insight in all this is that we have learned to realize more clearly (although this is not always seen uniformly and is also often seen to the detriment of the human spirit) that human consciousness is an incarnate consciousness. In other words, it enters the world by means of the very act through which it constitutes itself, that is, by communicating itself to that piece of worldly reality that is our own biologically sensitive physical nature. In a [123] word, it is a refinement of the ancient affirmation, *anima est forma corporis.*

This recognition of the "human condition" has caused "revolutions" in the sphere of dogmatic theology, or, more precisely, it is in the process of causing them—in Christology and Mariology, in the study of the Church and her

sacraments, in eschatology and even in the doctrine of grace and in treatises on faith, hope and love. I can do no more than provide a broad outline of a few of these.

a. The mystery of Christ and the Trinity[2]

The more finely shaded insights of modern anthropology have also permitted a purer dogmatic light to be thrown on the implicit riches of Christ's "true humanity." In this, the antitheses between the Alexandrian and the Antiochian christologies, which have persisted throughout the entire history of the Church, have gradually been overcome. The affirmation that Christ is not a human person *besides* being a divine person has undoubtedly been preserved (although sufficient justice has not always been done to this affirmation in certain circles). On the other hand, the humanity of Christ has not been "depersonalized"—a thing that occurred quite frequently in some theological manuals, which referred in so many words to the "impersonal human nature" of Jesus. Jesus' humanity is thus seen as personal, although not as a "human person." Jesus' humanity is regarded, in a more consistent way, as the basis, not indeed of his state of being a person, but of his state of being a person in a human manner. The Son himself is personally man, and the man Jesus is personally God the Son. A human act on Jesus' part is therefore a personal act of God appearing in
[124] human form. The entire concrete existence of this man is thus a grace, because this man's state of being a person for this humanity, which does not belong to itself but to the divine Son, is pure grace.

Since the Son is moreover only a person in his antithetic relationship with the Father and the Son's state of being a person consequently does not include but essentially is a subsisting I-thou relationship with the Father and the Holy Spirit, Christ too is only a person insofar as he is, by means of the hypostatic union, in an essential, personal relationship with the Father and with the Holy Spirit.

This ontological situation has its inevitable repercussion on Christ's human consciousness of himself. The "ontological person" must totally embrace the "psychological person" in itself, and this only means that a person is a being that is in itself and is therefore "illumined" from within. If true humanity is, then, impossible without consciousness of self, this means that Jesus' human consciousness, which, like his humanity, is of its very nature a *grace,* implies an intuitive human experience of his divine self, insofar as this self is conscious of itself in a *human* consciousness. In this perspective, light is thrown on what was elaborated for the first time in Latin theology by Aquinas as Christ's

[2] In view of the fact that I am only giving a few guidelines here, this christological outline will inevitably be very concise and schematic.

"experimental knowledge" in its distinctively human aspect, and it becomes at the same time apparent that there is nonetheless a certain distinction between Christ's viatorial *visio immediata* here on earth and his *visio beata* in heaven. The consequence of this consciousness of himself on the part of the man Jesus because of his essential relationship with the Father is that the Father is the centre of Christ's human consciousness. And if all speaking on the part of one man to his fellow man is a revelation of himself, this means, as far as Christ is concerned, that all his human speaking and all his human activity is, by definition, a revelation of the Father and a pouring out of the *Pneuma*.

This is bound to make us even more explicitly aware of the fact that Christ's [125] incarnation was a *becoming* man, a growing reality. It was not something that took place at one moment, for example, at the moment of conception in Mary's womb. His incarnation, his becoming man, was a growing reality which continued throughout the whole of Jesus' human life and which found its active point of rest in the closing aspect of the incarnation—Jesus' resurrecttion, glorification and eschatological pouring out of the Spirit.

Acceptance of the personal character of the incarnation has also made us all the more clearly aware of Christ, not only as the revelation to us of God's invitation of love, but also as the person who, as a man, accepted this offer of love from the Father. For this reason, we are bound to say that divine revelation was accomplished in and through the religious life of the man Jesus. His personal relationship with the Father in confrontation with the world was the source of Jesus' discourse addressed to his fellow men, in which he revealed the concrete form of all true religion to us. Religion itself is the sphere of revelation, which is therefore essentially a dialogue.

This more finely shaded insight into the personal mystery of the man Jesus has also resulted in Christ's *kenōsis* occupying a central position in present-day dogmatic theology. According to a phrase in Paul's letter to the Philippians—"he emptied himself" (Phil. ii. 7)—what the incarnation meant for the human experience of the Person of the Son was a *kenōsis* of self-emptying. Dimensions of which christians were far less aware in the past have been discovered in this "human condition" of Christ. Until recently, with the exception of Ambrose, theologians—at least all those of the Latin tradition—tended to regard this *kenōsis* as of minimal importance and applied it only to Christ's suffering and death. Now, however, it is seen to be of the greatest importance, something that [126] embraces the whole of Jesus' human life as a "situated human freedom," sin excepted. The *kenōsis* is thus seen to permeate Jesus' entire situational existence, and this view has led to the insight that Jesus, although personally God the Son, could, as a man here on earth, only be a conscious being in a human manner.

This movement has also led to the disclosure of more profound perspectives in the treatise concerning the "mysteries of the life of Christ"

(mysteria carnis Christi) and consequently in the doctrine of the redemption. The biblical insights, according to which there is a reference in the idea of the Fatherhood and the Sonship to the *risen* Christ and to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (by means of which we come to share in this resurrection, Rom. viii. 15-17), are very closely associated with the modern anthropological view. The biblical doctrine of the redemption has thereby acquired greater dimensions and the resurrection has once again been accorded a central place in this doctrine. In speculative Christology, this has at the same time brought the treatise on the Trinity into far closer touch with the mystery of Christ, and, via the Christological mystery, the treatise on the Trinity has thus also been "renewed." Moreover, purification of the physicist concept of "nature" has provided us with a better understanding of the divine nature. We no longer see this as a kind of communal, neutrally divine background to the three divine persons, but as indicating the manner in which these persons are one, as pointing to their community or *perichoresis*. Greater significance has also been given to the trinitarian character of the incarnation and of the redemption, and the treatise on God (the *De Deo uno)* has become from the very outset a theological treatise on the Trinity (although there *is* a tendency nowadays to avoid the word "treatise").

[127] The fact that the person is no longer regarded as extrinsic to "nature," but nature as the content of the person has also had its repercussions on the classic doctrine of the *instrumentum coniunctum,* by which patristic and scholastic theology tried to justify the saving value of Jesus' human actions. The sacramental saving manifestation of Christ is thus more closely related to his personal activity than it was in the case of the theory of the *natura humana ut instrumentum,* and has thereby acquired greater religious depth. In addition, the idea of the "intersubjectivity" between us and the man Jesus, who is personally God, has made it possible for the doctrine of grace to be expressed more in existential terms than in predicamental concepts.

The Church's teaching on the subject of Mary has also been purified by the new insight into the fully human condition of Jesus' life. In certain Mariological tendencies in the past, Mary was to some extent obliged to make up for the deficiency that was believed to exist in Jesus' humanity.

It is perhaps characteristic that the whole of this speculative "renewal"[3] due to anthropological insights is accompanied by a differently orientated historical judgment of, for example, the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia, which in the past was always regarded as suspect. In spite of some awkward formulations, this teaching now appears to those who support the new

[3] Once again, I must stress that this "renewal" should be seen as a throwing of new light on what was previously latent and unexpressed, but nonetheless implicitly accepted.

historical research as orthodox and Catholic. These parallel influences can, in my opinion, be explained by the fact that the content and meaning of the past—of the Bible and of patristic theology, for example—become constantly clearer according to the light in which these writings come to stand in the continuously renewed spiritual situation of mankind. Historical research in the sphere of exegesis must go on all the time, since the past is never completely [128] dead for man. The content of the Bible speaks to us even now, not only in the light of the word of revelation, but also in the light of our present-day awareness, perspectives and insights. For this reason, we are right to refer to a biblical theology as a part of dogmatic theology, a biblical theology in which the light of faith includes within itself the light of the intellect, that is, the light of human experience that reflects about itself. We therefore recognize that in each period of history man approaches Scripture differently and thereby discovers aspects which escaped the attention of those who studied the same Scripture in previous periods. This certainly shows that the contemporary perspective also enters into the interpretation of Scripture, and this applies equally to the study of patristic and scholastic theology, to name only two.

b. Sanctifying grace and the theological virtues

The modern anthropological view that the human person is essentially fitted for encounter with his fellow men and can possess himself fully only in and through the act of giving himself to the other person has also resulted in grace coming to be seen more in the light of an "intersubjective" relationship. Not only do we experience sanctifying grace even more clearly and explicitly than before as a personal living communion with God, but we also tend to give increased scope to the personal character of grace in our systematic thinking about this reality. Our attention is more closely focused nowadays on the truly reciprocal relationship of action and reaction between the divine and the human partner involved, while still maintaining the distinctively transcendent manner of God's reaction to man. This has meant that the structure of the treatise on grace is no longer based on the case of the conferment of grace upon immature children, but on the "encounter" between fully grown man and the living God in Christ. The reciprocal relationship existing between God and [129] ourselves has thus been given a central position in the doctrine of grace. The central truth of sanctifying grace is now seen to be the idea that God allows himself to be personally loved by man. The very essence of grace is to be found in this *unio amoris,* and "created grace" is only the ontological (but necessary) implication of this.

This return not only to the biblical and patristic conception of grace—and, at least in its essence, also to the scholastic view—but also, and above all, to the concept of grace that is ordinarily held by all christians by virtue of their living

experience, has resulted in our once again becoming aware of the (perhaps implicit or, more accurately expressed, implied) supernatural element of experience both of faith and of hope and love. This is indeed an authentic experience, the very heart of the life of grace, but it is at the same time an element that cannot normally be pointed out here and now in our human experience. It is nonetheless present in a special manner that is constantly appearing in a different light in the act of faith, the act of hope and the act of love. If this element were not present somehow in man's actual experience (*in actu exercito),* it would not be possible for us to see how these theological virtues are really based on a *supernatural* motive and not, for example, on a natural idea of God's infallibility, of his universal power and love, as we, as creatures, are able to some extent to grasp it. Here too, it would be wrong to make any cleavage between "ontology" and "psychology" and impossible to place grace as an ontic category completely outside the sphere of the human psyche, although this experience is only brought about in our natural humanity and is thus not a "miniature beatific vision." Moreover, both the Bible and patristic theology—and even scholastic theology which, in the context of the act of faith,
[130] referred to a *iudicium per modum connaturalitatis* in grace—pointed repeatedly to this aspect of experience in the three theological virtues. Nonetheless, in order to come to full and truly reflective *Catholic* understandding of this aspect of experience in the life of grace, we should have to wait until the time was ripe for mankind, growing in truth, to be able to see conceptual knowledge not simply as identical with human knowledge but as only one, albeit indispensable, element of the sum of human knowledge.

In this way, we have come to a greater awareness of the view that there is a personal, inward divine invitation at the source of our consent in faith, a grace that inwardly draws us to faith, a grace through which we experience in ourselves—although in an obscure manner—an inclination to believe what is presented to us by the Church as the Word of God—the *initium fidei.* Thus we hear God's "inward conversation," his revelation of himself. It is only by virtue of this divine conversation in grace that we are able to trust in his word and extend the grace of faith to, and elaborates it into a free personal consent in faith with, the revelation that the Church presents to us.

This personal character and this "implied" aspect of experience are also present in the virtue of hope. Within the already established attitude of faith, christian hope also has its origin only in a personal address, acting as a guarantee, by God who inwardly invites us to hope—that is, to trust in him. This invitation brings about in us an obscure experience of God's promise and pledge of his saving power which invites us to place our life in his hands. It is this element of grace—the "beginning of hope"—that brings about in us, probably in spite of conflicting human feelings, an inception of childlike trust

that is difficult to define and which we then, in the act of divine hope, extend to and elaborate into a free, personal decision and commitment. It is only in this [131] grace of hope, and thus in this reciprocal relationship between God and ourselves, that our hoping, as an act of grace, can be grounded. (This is so even though we can also, as in the case of faith, provide from without, as it were, a certain discreet and reasonable justification of this hope as a human act.)

Finally, christian love as a theological virtue also goes back to an initiative in grace on the part of God, who "first loved us" (1 John iv. 19) and who invites us to communion in love. It is in and through this inward divine invitation (which we can never, as in the case of faith and hope, divorce from our total human experience of life and our encounter with everything that addresses us in this world) that we experience a movement of the heart that can never be precisely situated in our human psyche, a movement through which we begin to "feel" ourselves as sons of a Father. This is the "beginning of love," and this "affective knowledge" of God's inviting love which is brought about by grace is something to which we give our consent in a free act of love, by means of which we here and now enter into personal, living communion with God.

Let me reiterate, then, that this divine invitation to faith, hope and love is, as it were, closely interwoven with our total experience as human beings. That is why it is not possible, in ordinary cases, to point to it here and now. However, the element of experience, which in the "ordinary" christian life is only present in a veiled manner in the background of the human consciousness as a magnet attracting everything to itself, comes to the forefront of the consciousness in the case of the mystic life. But in both cases the structure is the same: it is personal, and this means, as far as our personal relationship with God is concerned, *theologal*. It is because this theologal life is not purely conceptual that the "covenant" character—the essential I-thou relationship [132] which typifies the theological virtues—although certainly not denied in the past (all the greatest scholastics of the high Middle Ages were quite explicit in their affirmation of it) was undoubtedly "forgotten" in the later scholastic systematization of christian life, though not in the practice of christian life at this period. This is why there was, at this time, a too one-sided concentration of attention on "created grace." It is true that unless created grace is accepted, the reciprocal theological relationship between God and man becomes meaningless, but it is not created grace with which we are really concerned in our christian life.

In our own time justice is once more gradually being done in theological synthesis to the Christological and pneumatic character of grace and of the theological virtues, precisely because we have come explicitly to recognize the personal nature of grace. This has also led to the settlement at long last of a very old question, never fully resolved in scholastic theology. Because the scholastic

theologians made too sharp a distinction between the treatise on God *(De Deo uno)* and the treatise on the Trinity *(De Deo trino),* it was difficult for them to reconcile the life of grace, seen as a "sharing in God's nature," with the personal relationship of man, informed by grace, with the three divine persons in their oneness and their distinctness. When, however, it is more clearly established that the one living God is the three persons, and grace, on the other hand, is seen as a personal encounter with God (an encounter that nonetheless still takes place within faith), then it is at once clear that the presence of God and man to each other—that is, grace—is, of its very nature, a personal encounter with the three persons in their distinctness and their divine oneness. Any other sharing in the "divine nature" is thus excluded by the fact itself. *Personal* communion
[133] with the divine nature is impossible without a personal communion with the three divine persons. What is more, a personal communion is never an encounter with a "nature"; it is an encounter with a definite person! Thus, the old question as to whether we have "only" a *consortium divinae naturae* through grace, or have "in addition" a personal relationship with each of the three divine persons is really a false question, since the one is the other.

c. The Church and her sacraments

The modern idea of anthropological incarnation has certainly been of great assistance in throwing light on the mystery of the Church. It cannot be denied that the ecclesiology of the last century was remarkably dualistic—on the one hand, there were theologians who regarded the Church as a mystery without reference to her social structure and her historical existence and, on the other, historians who described events in the Church's life purely in terms of their temporal aspect. In contrast to this sharp division, the Church is nowadays increasingly considered as a mystery appearing on this earth in a historical form, so that in this sphere too the older dualism is being overcome. Both in her institutional form and in the life of the baptized christian in this world the Church is now seen and experienced as the visible form on earth of Christ's redemptive grace.

This has resulted in greater justice being done to the institutional aspect of the Church and in a greater opportunity being offered for a clearer understanding of the ambiguity of this institutional aspect. The communion of grace with Christ and the communion of those who believe with each other are "embodied" in the Church in institutional structures and at the same time fully realised in this incarnation. In the natural social life of man, the human person can, because of his essential incarnation, experience his communion with other men only in expressive acts of love through which he encounters others directly
[134] via physical nature. Built up on the *unio amoris,* the human community of persons is therefore concretely realized in all kinds of structures of economic,

social and cultural institutions for social and human welfare. Spiritual or personal communion among men is fully possible only by incarnation in structures of this kind. Although the Church as a community has an essentially different source, this anthropological structure nonetheless continues to have its effects in the Church as an institution. The interpersonal relationships, our communion of grace with Christ and with other believers, are made incarnate, and fully realised by this incarnation, in the institutional structures of the Church. In this way, the Church is, even in her institutional aspects, truly the visible form of the active presence in grace of Christ among us.

On the other hand, however, the institution is, even in the human community, essentially characterised by a certain ambiguity. It would be quite wrong to see the institutional structures of the human community on earth only as an expression and an embodiment of the spiritual communion. It is an essential feature of the incarnation that the human spirit embodies itself in data which are in them not human, but which acquire, through this incarnation, a share in humanity. This means that the institutional aspects of the human community also display certain *independence* in respect of interpersonal relationships, and are not a pure expression of spiritual communion. The science that we call empirical sociology is both possible and useful because of this.

This applies equally within the separate form that is the Church. This very independence of the institutional aspects makes it possible, for example, for someone to be really a member of the community of the Church and to receive the sacraments—to "practice," as it is called—while he is in fact outside the communion of love. The whole theology of the validity of sacraments which [135]
can be unfruitful, of the saving power of the priest's actions within the Church which is independent of the sanctity of the priest, and so on—all this theology is based, from the anthropological point of view at least, on this distinctively earthly quality of institutional structures. That is why a religious sociology of Church life is possible. It also indicates that, to whatever degree the *institutional* incarnation of the Church may form an essential feature of the Church here *on earth,* these earthly, institutional aspects will nonetheless pass away. On the other hand, the heavenly Church will not be purely spiritual. The visible incarnation of the Church will outlive time; only in heaven will it be, in and through pneumatic nature, the pure expression of our communion of love and grace with God in Christ. All this has resulted in the modern theologian's gaining a clearer insight into the relationship between religion, christianity and the function of the Church. It has also meant that we have achieved a more subtle understanding of the practice of christianity within the Church, without losing sight of the fact that it is only in the Church that the full, living form of

religion desired by God is present, and that all religion is inwardly attuned to the life of the Church.

It is probably quite well known that new vistas have been disclosed to theological reflection on the sacraments and the liturgy of the Church by this renewed anthropological understanding, which has, moreover, some relation to the biblical view of "body and soul." Of course, Catholics have always believed in the sacramental reality signified by the central rites of the celebration of the Eucharist and of the other sacraments. But we see now, even more explicitly than christians saw in the centuries immediately preceding the present one, that the sacraments are not "things" but the characteristically
[136] human form of man's encounter with the living Christ. In addition, we want once again to experience sacramental worship as a direct expression of this encounter with the Lord and once again actively to experience the public worship of the Church—the liturgy as such, that is— as the cult of the entire community. For this reason more attention has been devoted to the power of expression of the sacramental sign, and the modern anthropological insight into the essential incarnation of man has resulted in a more finely shaded view of the doctrine of the *signum,* thanks to the phenomenological analysis of human activity. This has also led to a deeper existential understanding of Aquinas's central principle, *sacramentum est in genere signi,* the sacrament is in the nature of a sign, even so far as the Eucharist is concerned. Here too, we have become more clearly aware of the fact that the sacrifice of the Mass, as a communal sacrifice and meal, is, thanks to transubstantiation, a *sacramentum-signum.* This means that the communal character of the Mass must *appear* from the sign itself. And although it may be true that a "private" Mass, with or without a server, is still really a communal sacrifice from the theological point of view, it is equally true that the sacramental character of my faith demands that I should *see* this in what is taking place before me. And this visible quality cannot be actively experienced in a "private" Mass. In the form of the "private Mass," the *sacramental* significance of the Eucharist was based on a very narrow foundation—a foundation that was just wide enough for it to remain within the limits of Catholic orthodoxy. In the same spirit of reappraisal of the power of expression of the sacramental sign, our "approaching the Lord's table"—that is, our coming to the sacrificial altar—is also seen as the expression of being *together* one in the Lord of the Church, so that the act of communion is now separated as little as possible from the communal celebration of the sacrifice.

[137] The liturgical movement has, however, not yet assimilated these dogmatic insights. Some Catholics even pin their faith to a number of practical changes. I agree with Dr. C. Bouman's observation that there has, up to now, been no more than a sincere concern in the direction of liturgical revival. But nothing of importance has ever come about in the Church without a background of such a

concern, and we are now waiting for an attempt to give a liturgically expressive form to our present-day religious awareness.

d. The eschatological expectation of the future

The influence of the new anthropological insights can be felt most strongly perhaps in the sphere of eschatology, a theological treatise which is at present, to quote Hans Urs von Balthasar's scornful comment, "closed for complete reconstruction." Of course the image is exaggerated, but it has a point to make if we apply it not so much to the scientific eschatology of the past as to the notions about eschatology that believers in general have derived from the scientific study of the subject. Our theological ideas about heaven, hell and purgatory, the soul "separated" from the body, the interim in the post-terrestrial state before the resurrection, the last judgment and the *parousia* are all, at least in their representational aspects, being fundamentally "demythologised" in the light of our more sharply defined insights into the essential correlation between the spirit which communicates itself to the body and the body which shares in this spirit. These realities are now rightly seen as first of all interior to man, while they preserve, at least from the resurrection onwards, their truly *physical* significance. They are seen as the *human* implications of our final communion of grace with God in Christ or of our final falling away from this communion. The resurrection of the body especially is no longer seen as an incomprehensible gift added to the beatific vision; it is seen as an essential incarnation of this vision, which then begins to exist in a [138] genuinely human condition involving emotion and awareness, as the beginning of heavenly intersubjectivity between all those who are co-recipients of grace in a glorified world; in a word, as the interhuman incarnation of the communion of grace with the God of heaven and earth and the God, above all, of all created persons.

The method employed in studying the last things has in particular been more sharply defined. In the light of the anthropological view that human life is of its very nature a life which, on the basis of the past, is moving in the present towards a future, and that the present is therefore the future which is realising itself now, we have come with greater justification to accept the idea, on the one hand, that the historical, non-mythical character of the end of the world cannot be denied, but, on the other, that the *eschata* will be nothing but the implications of man's communion of grace with God in the mode of completion. All eschatological statements, therefore, have their source in our present existence in grace, seen in its essential orientation towards its ultimate fulfillment. In this way, gradually the theological affirmation is finding acceptance that an eschatological treatise can tell us no more than we already know, theologically, in Christology, in the treatise on grace and in the *theological* treatise on man in

the context of creation. The modern treatise on the *eschata* is in this way able to remain free from false predictions of the future and from the apocalyptic oracles with which popular preachers sometimes try to catch their listeners' attention.

2. Bad influences

The new anthropological views have unfortunately also had a bad effect on some theological questions. This has come about because full weight has not
[139] been given to man's spiritual being in the versions of these philosophical views which are the most widespread. Such emphasis has been laid on the essential incarnation that the real transcendence of the human spirit (albeit in an incarnation on this earth) has, in general, not been fully taken into account. The view of M. Merleau-Ponty, for example, in which a trans-ascendancy of the human spirit, as J. Wahl calls it, has no place has had a strong unconscious influence on many modern theologians, with the result that various minor crypto-heresies are at present going round among Catholic theologians and laymen. Many theologians no longer accept the *anima separata* (although they dare not say so aloud), and for this reason these scholars also deny the "interim" and, partly perhaps under the influence of Bultmann's problem, make the first moment after death coincide with the resurrection. This has at the same time resulted in the general judgment, the *parousia,* the resurrection and the social dimensions of salvation being stripped of their true biblical significance.

Another unfortunate result of the new insights has been such a great attachment to the existential categories of inter-subjectivity and encounter that the *ontological* implications of the communion of grace with God have been completely neglected. This has meant a ready denial, with a wink in the direction of reformed christians, of what is termed *gratia creata,* the usefulness and meaning of which is no longer seen. This clearly reveals the lack of metaphysics in modern phenomenology. But these examples of how theology has gone off the rails can also be explained by an excessive reaction against misrepresentations occurring in our theological manuals, in which the *anima separata* is often presented as an angel and *gratia creata* is dealt with at great length in physical categories and the personal aspect of grace obscured.

[140] Other theologians have similarly gone off the rails in connection with the *kenōsis,* or Christ's emptying of himself. Some have given such exaggerated emphasis to Christ's "human condition" that the insight according to which this Man is really "full of grace" and even is God in a human manner is simply disregarded. The deep, inscrutable character of the man Jesus *as a mystery* is forgotten—the content of truth in the Alexandrian Christology is sacrificed in this Antiochian tendency. The transcendence of the incarnation of Christ is

thereby insufficiently perceived. The incarnation is identified with being completely man—*la présence du Christ au monde,* the presence of Christ in the world, in which it is often overlooked that this presence is a *redeeming* presence. Many having responsibilities in the practical spheres of pastoral care and the apostolate have slipped off the rails as a consequence. It would, however, be wrong to regard the whole renewal of present-day theology with suspicion simply because of a few errors of this kind.

3. THE HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF HUMAN LIFE

1. Good influences

A third characteristic which, although dating from an earlier period (Hegel, the German romantic movement, Bergson), is closely connected with this phenomenology is the discovery of the historical dimension of human consciousness and the essential historical character of human life. It may well be significant in this context that the term "salvation history" was almost unknown in Catholic theology before the Second World War. The reference "salvation history" does not, to the best of my knowledge, appear in a single theological dictionary, with the exception of the recently issued part of the [141]
second edition of the *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche.* In philosophical lexicons and dictionaries, on the other hand, quite substantial entries appeared at a far earlier date under the heading *Histoire* or *Geschichte.* In any case, the relatively recent insight into the historical aspect of revelation has radically changed the entire plan of every theological treatise.

God accomplishes in history his intentions with regard to man. God's activity is history in that it reveals itself, and it reveals itself by becoming history. Revelation is a growing historical process set in motion anonymously in the concrete life of every human being in the world. It acquired a more concrete form in Israel and finally reached the constitutive phase of its maturity in Christ and in the early apostolic Church. Whenever a present-day theologian wishes to enquire about the content of divine revelation in connection, for example, with faith in creation, he turns first of all to Israel, to see how this people—and they precisely as the people of God—experienced the reality of creation and interpreted it in the religious sense. Then he considers Christ and how he, conscious of his Sonship, actively experienced this reality. Finally, he investigates the way in which the earliest christians, as the people of God redeemed in Christ, concretely experienced and interpreted this same reality of creation.

The theologian does not, therefore, examine directly the so-called *nuda vox Dei,* as Karl Barth proposes. It is, in any case, impossible to see how he can do this. Faith is an essential correlative to revelation, and God accomplishes his

revelation *in a dialogue* with mankind. The theologian therefore considers in the first place the report or the account of the way in which God, in his intervention
[142] within salvation history, allowed a religious meaning to be given to creation or the *eschata,* for example, and allowed these to be experienced in a religious way by his chosen people. This at once distinguishes the modern treatise on, for example, the creation from the *De Deo Creante* of our theological manuals, which is often no more than a disguised theodicy. In the modern treatise light is thrown, as it were from the perspective of the history of salvation, on the mystery of the philosophical idea of creation, which is assumed as a natural *praeambulum fidei,* a predisposition for faith. Something of the distinctively divine manner of this unique activity that we call creation, *creare ex nihilo,* is thereby illuminated.

In this we are, however, conscious of the fact that the whole of the history of salvation is looking forward towards Christ. The theological source, the *locus theologicus,* even of faith in the creation is really the personal, human history of the historical Christ. This applies to every theological treatise, and the consequence has been a complete renewal of the theological method—in contrast to the method employed by previous generations of theologians, we now come to a *theologia* via an *oikonomia.* The *oikonomia* of salvation is the means by which we come to a *theologia.* Christian immortality, for example, is thus seen to be quite different from immortality in the philosophical sense, although the latter forms the necessary preamble to the former. Philosophical immortality is an *implication of the human state of being a person,* whereas christian immortality is an *implication of our communion of grace* with the living God in Christ. This christian insight has grown in and from the history of Israel's
[143] salvation in dialogue with God and in and from living christian experience, an experience which enabled Paul to say that nothing could separate us from Christ, not even death (Rom. viii. 38-39). Christian immortality therefore essentially implies, via Christ, a relationship with glorified physical nature, and is quite different from the pure "continued existence of the soul," which is assumed in this, because otherwise the personal identity between the man on earth and the man in heaven is endangered. Speculative theology therefore automatically acquires a new form in the light of salvation history, whereas, in the past, theological treatises were often given a philosophical emphasis, and philosophy, on the other hand, was frequently given a theological slant.

This awareness of the historical dimension in human life and our resulting interest in the history of salvation has not only changed the plan of every theological treatise. It has also opened up many new perspectives in the content of faith, and has even led to the emergence of all kinds of new treatises. Not only in eschatology, for example, actively forming the basis for a *theology* of Church history—a similar development is also taking place in the creation of a

theology of earthly values, of history, of work, of the physical cosmos as the environment of man, and so on.

It also goes without saying that our new insight into the historical character of the *actus humanus* is of enormous importance in the sphere of moral theology—that is, in our understanding of the natural law, of mortal and venial sin and of asceticism and mysticism. In this context too, we have gained an important insight into the existence of a certain, although inadequate, distinction between men's basic personal will and his separate actions. Furthermore, we have come more consistently to appreciate that there is a parallel in the order of good to what is known, in the order of evil, as mortal sin and venial sin—namely, an *actus humanus graviter bonus* and an *actus humanus leviter bonus.* This insight is of enormous importance in connection with the reception of the sacraments, as well as, for example, in connection with judging [144] the validity of a marriage (as an *actus graviter humanus).*

2. Bad influences

Here too (and how could it be otherwise, in view of the fact that all progress in theology presents us with fresh opportunities for error?), the new theology does not always keep strictly to the rails. And once again, it is a faulty philosophical view that has produced a one-sided theology. Phenomenology, which correctly stresses the historical character of all human life, has not always appreciated the fact that this historical character in man is accompanied by a *consciousness* of time in the strict sense of the word. And a consciousness of time implies a rising above time. This does not mean that we somehow come to stand outside time and the world, but that there is a *transhistorical orientation* in the historical character of our human life. The result of this misunderstanding has been that speculative theology is frequently neglected. Recent theology is often no more than salvation history—it is identified with Christology.

A typical example of this tendency to go no further than the *oikonomia* of salvation and not to see a *theologia* in the light of this *oikonomia* is the recent work *Fragen der Theologie heute.* One treatise is missing from this theological work, which is otherwise well conceived in its marked tendency towards salvation history. This is the *De Deo uno et trino,* the treatise on God. To me this seems to be symptomatic of our lack of insight into the fact that we in some way or another really transcend the historical character of human life. But here too, reaction is at the back of the exaggeration. The theological manuals were often too rigid in their presentation of a *theologia* without *oikonomia,* and it is [145] inevitable that a number of scholars will react against this by denying any place to *theologia* in their renewed interest in the economy of salvation and, in so doing, step outside the limits of the Catholic faith.

4. RECOGNITION OF THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER OF THE RELIGIOUS ELEMENT AND THE CASE FOR A CERTAIN SECULARISATION

A fourth characteristic, which is also related to the phenomenological view of the essential incarnation of the human person, is our present-day awareness of man's task within this world and the tendency towards secularisation. Natural legal structures have been rediscovered. We are all familiar with mocking observations of the following sort. Whereas in the Middle Ages processions led by the clergy went through the cities in times of plague, today we prescribe isolation and the necessary drugs in such emergencies, and the epidemic is quickly stopped—but in the Middle Ages it would get worse after a penitential procession. Whereas men used to pray "From storm, thunder and lightning deliver us, Lord," modern man has a lightning conductor installed on his house, and that seems to work better too. The vital question concerning the fitness of this world for habitation and the meaning and the future of life is at this moment central. Modern man takes his life into his own hands—he is *faber suiipsius*. His power even extends as far as the world of the stars and planets, which in the past was deified. All this has resulted in spontaneous faith—the "faith of the Breton peasant woman"—being profoundly disturbed. Faith itself seems have been seriously impaired by it.

I feel, however, that this modern situation, which is increasingly forcing believers to live in a state of "diaspora," has above all a *purifying* function. We
[146] had allowed faith to become devalued, so that it had become little more than a life-raft in emergencies. We had become insensitive to the complete transcendence of revelation over our significance within this world. Our intimacy with the supernatural, which is more real to us than the chair we sit on, was not always the intimacy of someone who knows himself to be secure. We have tended to see God too much as a function of our life, rather than seeing our life as something in his service. We had become insufficiently aware of the fact that prayer for temporal things is incomprehensible if we limit ourselves to the purely natural standpoint of the relationship between "cause and effect." That is why the claim is nowadays always being made that prayer for temporal things is meaningless. The Church, however, takes a different view, because she experiences the reality of God not only naturally but also supernaturally, religiously. If the God with whom we associate personally is the God of creation who is interested in everything that happens in the world, and if, on the other hand, this world, in which we are so fully involved, also interests us, then it goes without saying that we are bound to speak spontaneously, in our personal encounters with the living God in prayer, about those very things, which are of as great interest to him as they are to us. It is only in the light of the reciprocal relationship existing between God and ourselves thanks to grace that there can really be any question of a distinctively divine personal reaction to

man's personal asking. Even in temporal things, God wants to be man's father in Christ and Christ wants to place his mastery over things in the service of the man who believes in it (without, however, wishing to replace man and his culture). In the past we have not always seen this in its true perspective. We have, moreover, often been shortsighted in this regard. We have been anxious about the most minor temporal concerns, but more important [147] things—international tensions, the future of our secular world, the new society that is being fashioned (to a very great extent outside the sphere of christianity), distress in the underdeveloped countries, and so on—are also "temporal things" and just as important as fine weather or rain for the crops. We were not wrong to pray for the latter, but we were wrong to make no mention in our prayers of the former, those other "temporal" things which, even from the secular point of view, may be more important than our daily bread—as though God had nothing to do with them!

We have now come to acknowledge that the christian's work in the world does not exclusively have heaven in view, he is responsible also for this earth and its future. The christian is aware now that, although he is called to a supernatural destiny, he must nonetheless remain faithful to the world he is living in—he is fully responsible for its future. He accepts, along with the world, all the laws and all the possibilities that are implied in his existence in it. His attitude towards human society and its whole culture is one of positive affirmation. He is conscious of his intimate association in this world with all men, and there is nothing to prevent him from co-operating with anyone if this cooperation is directed towards the preservation and the development of human values and does not involve him in evil. In all this activity, he is *in faith*—his secular concern for this world is a christian task. It is, therefore, the aim of christianity to give a form to this world. Now as never before in the past we are aware that man is not simply a piece of nature, but really and radically a subject, making his own history—*faber suiipsius*—on a situational basis, although this basis no longer appears to be as firmly fixed as we once thought. This inevitably has repercussions on the social, economic and political action of [148] Catholics. Basing our argument on authority as the regulating principle, we Catholics have, for example, too often tended to reason that the authority of the State should be exclusively concerned with the preservation of the existing order and not be the creative subject of real structural reforms. We have frequently covered unjust systems of law with the cloak of so-called charity and have been all too readily inclined to look on the outbreak of world or state revolution as the coming of the beast of the Apocalypse. The consideration which we have neglected, in such cases, is that usually revolution is in some sense an expression of a genuine longing for a more humane world, and our too frequent reaction has been to resist the emergence of this new world by

appealing to the so-called God of the order of creation. *Homo faber suiipsius*—man himself, as a subject, has the task of making the world a dwelling-place fit for and worthy of man, a place in which the human community of persons can grow, in justice and love and through grace, into a communion of saints.

The theology of the laity—the theology of the significance and the real place of the laity in the Church—is also closely related to all this. Of course, we should not restrict the role of the layman to his task in the world. In the theological sense of the word, "layman" means the baptized member of the community of faith of the Church. Through baptism, the layman (regarded as a category within the Church) has, like the priest, an ecclesial and sacral task. The only difference between the two is that the clergy fulfils this sacral task in the mode of the apostolic authority, whereas the laity fulfils it as the "people of God." For this reason every layman is jointly responsible with the clergy for the
[149] life of the Church. Lay people have their own word to say and their own actions to perform in the Church. By their incorporation into the Church, "the sign set up among the nations," they share in its essential function—that is, to give a visible form to grace in their whole lives, and thus to be themselves an effective and visible sign of grace in the world. The theological definition of the laity is thus to be found in their membership here and now of the Church, with an ecclesial mission. It is, of course, true that this ecclesial mission, which the layman receives by virtue of his baptism, is given to a *man*—that is, to someone who, as a man, has a meaningful task to fulfil in this world; it is consequently given to a man who has the task of working for a humane world order. But the layman does not possess *this* mission by virtue of his baptism. What his baptism gives him is the task of *integrating* this worldly role into his communion of grace with God in Christ. For the layman, then, this worldly task forms a part of his total religious attitude to life. He has to integrate his secular life into his faith, which means that an "apostolic secular" existence is the province of the christian layman.

It is, of course, understandable that all kinds of deviations occur in this sphere too, although these often constitute a danger for authentic faith. The worldly aspect of the religious attitude sometimes results in a misunderstanding of the transcendent aspects of christianity. The "evangelical counsels," especially virginity and the value of prayer in itself have been disputed by some scholars who feel uncomfortable in the presence of these aspects of christianity. The authority of the hierarchy of the Church is appreciated only in its motivation; the autonomy of the structures relating to this world is not always seen in the perspective of the religious life-destiny, and so on. These deviations, which occur in good faith, are inherent in any growing

pains, but they must be overcome if the element of truth in the contemporary process of secularisation is to be integrated into *Catholic* truth. [150]

5. THE ECUMENICAL CHARACTER OF PRESENT-DAY DOGMATIC THEOLOGY

Now, more than ever in the past there is conscious dialogue between men of differing views and beliefs. As a result there has also been a new growth in tolerance. Theology has moved in the same direction. To a far greater extent than hitherto, Catholic theologians are engaging actively in conversation with their counterparts not only in the other christian churches, but also in the other great world religions and even—although this seems to be coming about much more slowly—with modern atheistic humanists. This is, of course, also connected with our recognition of the part which *perspective* plays in human consciousness, a recognition which, although it involves the danger of our becoming rather indifferent to objective truth, nevertheless makes us fundamentally alert to the content of truth in what others think and believe. Furthermore, the full content of truth in any partial truth can be affirmed only when this partial truth is integrated into the total truth. Every partial affirmation of truth acts as a spur to the discovery within its own context of the wholeness natural to truth. The arguments of those whose thought and faith is different from ours look, to a certain degree, objectively in the direction of catholicity—they contain an objective dynamism which is often revealed in subjective experience as an openness to, a seeking and a desire for, conversation.

Modern dogmatic theologians are fully aware of this, with the result that their work is now characterized by a markedly ecumenical orientation whereas, before, the construction of all its parts clearly formed an anti-heretical synthesis. Dogmatic theology has thereby achieved a greater inner balance, in which "forgotten truths"—that is, aspects of faith which had been thrust into the background by the reaction against the abandonment of other dogmatic elements—have once more been accorded their rightful place. [151]

Dogmatic theology has, however, become more ecumenical not only by abandoning the anti-heretical tendency of the earlier dogmatic synthesis, but also by considering the ecclesial problem of divided christianity and by engaging in positive dialogue with other churches. Confrontation with, for example, a living, strongly religious reformed practice has forced Catholic theologians once more to reflect positively about the ecumenical character of the Catholic faith in all its aspects. As a christian category, the *oikoumenē* is a gift of God to the *Catholica,* a gift that is to be found in the fact that the one Church of Christ is, by divine predestination, the home of all men. This gift cannot be

lost, even by divisions and schisms. But it can be obscured, on the one hand by divisions and on the other by internal infidelity.

In addition, new problems have been raised by the fact that the divided churches have for centuries pursued their own historical course, so that each of them has developed further along *independent* lines. Apart from the essential structures which the Lord gave to his Church *ne varietur* (although in growth and movement as far as their concrete form is concerned), the visible figures of these forms have not stayed the same throughout the course of time. The Church is constantly making herself incarnate in elements belonging to this earth, and these elements are to some extent transitory. Moreover, every period in the history of the Catholic Church has its own special emphases—in each period, one thing is given greater prominence, another less, just as each period
[152] has its own emphases in piety (the so-called *metabletica* of the religious life). This applies equally to the other christian churches. Thus, the dogmatic differences between the various christian churches can be increased and made more complicated by all kinds of forms and concrete emphases which are not, as such, essential to the authentic religious life of the Church.

In the case of the Catholic Church, for example, we are aware of the emergence, alongside the deeper, inviolable significance of the *Romana Ecclesia,* of the so-called "Romish" characteristics in Catholic piety, especially since the Counter-Reformation, characteristics which are, in my opinion, to a great extent conditioned purely by historical circumstances. In this sense, we may correctly speak of a "*coming* ecumenical Church," meaning that the coming *form* of the Catholic Church will have to manifest its *oikoumenē* in a special way. It is precisely for this reason that a growing concern is being felt in the Church and in Catholic theology for the need to strip the structure and form of the modern Church of everything that obscures her *oikoumenē,* so that the one Bride of Christ may once again be clearly recognized by all. Catholics do, of course, sometimes go to extremes and some, as Pope John expressed it, will be satisfied in their desire for a complete change in the Church's concrete form only when the pope casts nets again in the sea of Gennesaret! But even those who do not deny the sober law of historical growth are conscious of a clear need to give a new form to the Church.

Certainly the Catholic Church can never renounce her belief that the deposit of faith was entrusted to her care. On the other hand, however, we cannot pretend that Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox Christians have simply to come to us in order to gain everything from us and that we have nothing to learn from them. In giving a concrete form to our deposit of faith, there can
[153] certainly be an *integration* of the other christian churches. It is in fact a question of rectifying those aspects of Catholic thought and action that have become too one-sided, and of reinstating certain aspects of faith that have, in the course of

history, been forced, because of our traditionally anti-heretical attitude, from their central place onto the periphery, or vice-versa, at least in their visible form and in the concrete manner in which they have been experienced in the life of the Church.

If a Catholic is converted to reformed Christianity, we call this infidelity, because he has objectively abandoned a part of the christian inheritance. On the other hand, the conversion of a reformed Christian to Catholicism is not regarded, from the Catholic point of view, as infidelity to the Christian deposit of faith of the reformed churches. (Even from the reformed point of view, this conversion can only be called infidelity with regard to what is "exclusively" Protestant.) This christian deposit in itself is originally Catholic. It will be found again in the Catholic Church, integrated into what was in a certain sense renounced by the Reformation. On the other hand, however, we are then faced with the problem of how the concrete forms given to the positive treasury of christian faith by the Protestant churches (forms which in themselves may be called just as good as Catholic forms) can be accorded their proper place within the present form of the Catholic Church. Certain authentically christian forms which may, after all, be only weakly represented in the Catholic Church are given a prominent place in the religious experience of the Protestant communions. (Examples of these are bible reading and the holy desire to hear the Word proclaimed.) It is impossible to cancel out the past in the history of christianity —this cannot be done for psychological reasons, but above all it cannot be done for religious and dogmatic reasons. This in turn raises the question as to whether Protestant Christians, in view of the form which [154] developed within their own historical traditions and which they have given to the originally Catholic deposit of faith (a form which cannot, in itself, be explained by what is "exclusive" to reformed Christianity), will here and now find room to live in the *Catholica* so that they can really feel at home with their own positively christian past.

Reformed Christians—especially theologians—who are in living contact with the new developments in Catholic theology are often astonished by the fact that very little trace of these new emphases can be discovered in the concrete life of Catholics within the Church. This causes them to react in one of two ways—either they think that these Catholic theologians, though unquestionably theologians, are not really Catholic theologians, but rather offshoots of the Catholic Church; or they wonder whether there is really not such a thing as "Roman equivocation," in which two separate standards exist—a theology for domestic use—authentic in its private sphere—and a theology for export and expansion. I have put it in an extreme form, but I have experienced reactions of this kind. The after-care of those who are converted from Protestantism to Catholicism is therefore one of the great pastoral

problems, and this applies perhaps more to the Netherlands than, for example, to Germany. Such conversions often result in disillusionment or spiritual tensions, at least in the case of those average converts who are not trained in theology. That is why we can only hope, in the spirit of Pope John XXIII, that—without doing violence to the never very rapid process of development of our historical humanity—the years after the Vatican Council will honour the authentic gains of the new Catholic theology and give them evangelical expression in the renewal of the outward form of the Church.

TABLE OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATION

Revelation and theology is a translation of *Openbaring en Theologie* (Theologische Peilingen I), published by Uitgeverij H. Nelissen, Bilthoven, Netherlands, 1964. The chapters were originally published as indicated below.

Part 1

1. Revelation, scripture, tradition, and teaching authority
   First published as 'Openbaring, schriftuur, traditie en leergezag', *KT* 14 (1963), 85-99; also included, together with an exchange of views between catholic and protestant professors, in *Jaarboek 1962 Kath. Theol. Nederl.*, Hilversum 1963, 137-62.
2. The Lord and the preaching of the apostles
   First published as 'De kyriale waardigheid van Christus en de verkondiging', *VT* 29 (1958-9), 34-8.
3. Revelation-in-reality and revelation-in-word
   First published in *LV* 46 (1960), 25-45; and, with a different introduction, as 'De dienst van het woord in verband met de Eucharistieviering', *TL* 44 (1960), 44-61.
4. The development of the apostolic faith into the dogma of the church
   First published as 'Dogma-ontwikkeling', *Theologisch Woordenboek* I, Roermond and Maaseik 1952, col. 1087-106.

Part 2

5. What is theology?
   First published as 'Theologie', *Theologisch Woordenboek* III, Roermond and Maaseik 1958, cols. 4485-542.
6. The bible and theology
   First published as 'Exegese, Dogmatik und Dogmenentwicklung', *Exegese und Dogmatik,* ed. H. Vorgrimler, Mainz 1962, 91-114. This version has already been published in English translation as 'Exegesis, Dogmatics and the Development of Dogma', *Dogmatic versus Biblical Theology,* trans. Kevin

Smyth, Burns & Oates, London 1965,115-45. The new English translation by N.D. Smith appearing here is from the Dutch version of the original German: 'Bijbel en Theologie', *Exegese en Dogmatiek,* Bilthoven 1963, 92-115.

7. The place of the church fathers in theology
   First published as 'Kerkvader', Theologisch Woordenboek II, Roermond and Maaseik 1957, cols. 2768-72.
8. The creed and theology
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9. The liturgy and theology
   First published as 'Lex orandi lex credendi', *Theologisch Woordenboek* II, Roermond and Maaseik 1957, cols. 2926-8.
10. Scholasticism and theology
    a. The sources of theology according to Aquinas
    First published as 'Loci theologici' and 'Gezagsargument', *Theologisch Woordenboek* II, Roermond and Maaseik 1957, cols. 3004-06 and 1908-20.
    b. Truth or relevance for the christian life in the scholastics
    First published as Technische heilstheologie', *OG* 27 (1945), 49-60. It therefore relates to the theology of the inter-war years.

Part 3

11. The concept of "Truth"
    A lecture given in 1954 to the Vlaams Werkgenootschap voor Theologie in Ghent. The second and third sections are of a later date (1962). The whole chapter was in *KA* 17 (1962), cols. 1169-1180.
12. The non-conceptual intellectual dimension in our knowledge of God according to Aquinas
    First published in *TP* 14 (1952), 411-453.
13. The non-conceptual element in the act of faith: a reaction
    First published in *TT* 3 (1963), 167-194.

Part 4

14. Salvation history as the basis of theology: *Theologia* OR *Oikonomia?*
    A lecture given to the Vlaams Werkgenootschap voor Theologie in Brussels in 1953.
15. The new Trends in present-day dogmatic theology
    First published in *TT* 1 (1961), 17-46.